FINAL REPORT OF THE PARKS AND PEOPLE TASK FORCE

Approved in Principal by: REGIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
October 1990

Prepared by:

Ron Hooper (Chairman)
Greg Belland
Janet Breau
Bill Browne
Judy Otton
Bob Weaver

91-03076/

FOREWORD

This report was prepared by a Task Force created by the Director General, Western Region and the Regional Management Committee. The Task Force members are Ron Hooper (Chairman), Greg Belland, Janet Breau, Bill Browne, Judy Otton and Bob Weaver. Invaluable contributions were also made by Sandy Davis (Regional Director General), David Bowes (former Director of Strategic Planning), Jim Barlow (Director of Strategic Planning) and David Smith of The Coopers and Lybrand Consulting Group.

The overall direction contained in this report received RMC approval in October 1990. Obviously a number of recommendations require further study, precedent to a decision on their implementation.

Printed on
recycled paper

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS i

A. Managing Visitor Impact i
B. Service Excellence i
C. Environmental Stewardship ii
D. Tourism ii
E. Outdoor Recreation iii
F. Organizational Effectiveness iii

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION AND BELIEF STATEMENT 1

A. Our Mission 1
B. Belief Statements are Required to define Our Region's Role and Responsibilities to Canadians and Park Visitors 2

SECTION 2

MANAGING VISITOR IMPACTS WILL REQUIRE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF VISITORS AND MORE RIGOROUS STANDARDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY 4

A. Background - Sustainability and the Limits of Acceptable Change ... 4
B. In 1990 We Are Not Effectively Managing Visitor Impact 6
C. Future Trends Will Make the Proactive Management of Visitor Impact Essential 8
D. New Framework for Managing Visitor Impact is Needed to Meet Future Challenges 10
E. Recommendations 11

SECTION 3

SERVICE EXCELLENCE IS THE KEY TO MAINTAINING PUBLIC SUPPORT AND FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP 14

A. Background - The Public Sector is Service 14
B. At Present the CPS is Not Well Positioned to Provide Service Excellence 17
C. In the Future There Will be a Growing Need to Concentrate on Service Excellence 19
D. Recommendations 21

SECTION 4

THE CPS MUST PLAY A MORE OUTWARD LOOKING ROLE IN PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP THROUGH HERITAGE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS 25

A. Background - New Challenges 25
B. In 1990 We are Not Doing Enough to Foster Environmental Stewardship 26
C. Several Major Trends Will Affect the Future Direction of the CPS in Promoting Environmental Stewardship 28
D. New and Innovative Roles for Environmental Education and Environmental Advocacy are Needed to Foster Environmental Stewardship 29
E. Recommendations 30

SECTION 5

LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS REQUIRED TO MEET RESOURCE PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE PARK EXPERIENCES 34

A. Background - The Tourism Industry 34
B. In 1990 We React to Tourism Initiatives 34
C. The Western Region Must be Positioned to Respond to the Continuing Growth of the Tourism Industry 36
D. A New Leadership Role in Tourism is Needed 38
E. Recommendations 38

SECTION 6

BETTER RECREATION PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT CAN SERVE TO ENHANCE USE OF FACILITIES, VISITOR SATISFACTION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF VISITOR IMPACT 42

A. Background - National Parks and Outdoor Recreation 42
B. In 1990, We Have Fallen Behind in the Outdoor Recreation Field .. 42
C. The Demand for Outdoor Recreation Will Continue to Grow and Evolve 44
D. A More Dynamic Role in Outdoor Recreation is Needed 45
E. Recommendations 46

SECTION 7

A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE 48

A. New Skills are Required For Our Employees 49
B. We Need to Streamline, Integrate and Improve Our Management Processes 54
C. Our Organizational Structure Needs to Change to Meet Future Challenges 57
D. We Need to do a Better Job of Recognizing Achievement 71
E. Re-aligning our Organizational Beliefs, Value Systems and Traditions is Needed 73

SECTION 8

CONCLUSION - WHAT IS NEXT? 75

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force Report contains six major sections (which deal with) **MANAGING VISITOR IMPACTS, SERVICE EXCELLENCE, FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP, OUR TOURISM ROLE, OUR ROLE IN OUTDOOR RECREATION, and ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.** Each of these topic areas was considered in terms of the situation we face in 1990 and the opportunities and challenges we can anticipate in 2000. An emphasis was placed on developing a limited number of broad or strategic recommendations along with a comprehensive list of "action statements" associated with each recommendation. Major recommendations which are associated with each of the topic areas follow.

A. Managing Visitor Impact

We describe the "management of visitor impacts" as managing proactively so as to maintain the integrity of the natural and cultural resources that we protect and preserve. We recommend the following.

- The Western Region must become a leader in managing visitor impacts based on principles of environmental sustainability,[1] which are appropriate to national parks and national historic sites.

- The region needs to investigate in detail the suitability of using the **Limits of Acceptable Change** and the **Recreational Opportunity Spectrum** in our planning and management processes.

B. Service Excellence

The public sector is service! A commitment to service excellence is required if we are to build constituency support and foster a sense of environmental stewardship. Our group found that we are not well positioned to provide service excellence. We are deficient in service know-how and service marketing and monitoring techniques.

---

[1] Throughout this report the word "environment" is used in a context which includes both cultural and natural resources. "Environment surroundings... especially those that significantly affect people" (Oxford Dictionary).

In order to respond to the demand for increased public service the Western Region must embark on an ambitious and comprehensive program to establish itself as a leader in **service excellence** within the public service.

C. Environmental Stewardship

New opportunities and challenges face us in fostering environmental stewardship. We focused on two tools for building stewardship - heritage education and environmental advocacy. An innovative role for **heritage education**, which moves beyond traditional interpretation programming, and a new role for us in **advocacy** is recommended.

- We must be assertive in redirecting the role of interpretation toward creative, integrated and high quality **heritage education** programs which reach out to a broader cross-section of the public, achieving a high level of awareness toward environmental stewardship and harnessing the resources of others

  By adopting this role we will be recognized and acknowledged as the premier (exemplary) sites for experiencing and learning about Canada's natural and cultural resources in authentic settings.

- The Western Region must play a stronger **advocacy** role in order to build constituency support and improve public attitudes toward environmental stewardship, environmental sustainability, and the national parks mandate, as well as to develop an effective early warning system for potential issues, problems and future trends.

D. Tourism

Tourism is big business in our parks and will increase in importance. Tourism is often promoted by its proponents as an environmentally-clean industry. We know this is not necessarily so.

Our Task Force found that we have never articulated our role in tourism and have chosen to allow others to promote our parks as tourist attractions. As a region, we react to the industry's initiatives and then feel victimized by our lack of success in controlling the inevitable impacts.

Therefore, we recommend that the Western region adopt a radical new, and "take-charge" role in tourism.

- The Western Region must become a credible, environmentally-responsible leader and active partner in the tourism industry of western Canada. Our niche will be to provide high quality tourism experiences consistent with protected areas containing heritage resources of national and international significance.

E. Outdoor Recreation

We are no longer a leader in providing outdoor recreational opportunities. The Western Region cannot remain contemporary and relevant in the outdoor recreation field by merely managing facilities. Our Task Force group found that leaders in the field are "facilitating" experiences. We have therefore recommended a new orientation for our role in outdoor recreation which is consistent with the international reputation of our parks, and the need to protect and preserve heritage resource integrity.

- We must regain our position as leaders in the field by providing and managing a specific range of high quality outdoor recreational experiences. These must be consistent with protected areas containing heritage resources of national and international significance. Consequently, we must be recognized experts in planning, assessing and managing visitor impacts for a carefully defined range of recreational activities.

F. Organizational Effectiveness

We will need a highly effective organization to meet the opportunities and challenges before us. Our Task Force considered five key factors that are hall-marks of high performance organizations-people skills, management processes, organizational structure, recognition of achievement and organizational culture. We could be at the forefront of implementing initiatives identified in the Public Service 2000 report.

1. People Skills

We need to build on the dedication and expertise of our employees. New skills are needed in our region in the areas of tourism, partnership/ business relations, service excellence, outdoor recreation, heritage education and advocacy, and the general area of managing visitor impacts. There is also a requirement to implement a comprehensive hospitality and orientation program. We suggest that the "Park Officer" model used by the U.S. National Parks Service be considered so that our managers' options to allocate human resources are not constrained solely on the basis of specific sub-activity experience.

2. Management Processes

We must continue to integrate, streamline and generally improve our management processes. We provide recommendations for change under the following headings.

a) Our plans need to contain or be based on sound strategic direction.

b) Our plans need to set direction but leave latitude for managers to manage.

c) Our processes need to be better integrated.

d) Our processes need to be streamlined.

e) Our processes need to be outward looking; we require dynamic processes to respond to the dynamic environment we work in.

f) Our plans must establish management standards for the types and levels of acceptable use.

g) Our processes must result in decisions which can be acted on with confidence.

h) Standards for service and product-line quality need to be an integral part of our planning processes.

3. Organizational Structure

The current organizational structure in our region is functional, hierarchial and too rigid to meet future challenges. We will need an organizational structure which is innovative, responsive and focused on the maintenance of heritage resource integrity and service quality. Although a complete analysis of organizational structure was beyond the mandate of the Task Force, we provide recommendations on six functional groupings.

a) Community Affairs/ Ennvironmental Education/ Advocacy

The Community Affairs function should be expanded to include all outreach and public affairs activities, including heritage education and advocacy. Heritage education must reach beyond park boundaries into urban areas and build partnerships to assist in communicating environmental messages.

b) Service Management

A new Service Management function should be established to ensure that service excellence is provided in all aspects of park facilities, service and programs. This group should be structured along service or product lines such as campgrounds, trails, parkways and some historic parks.

c) Planning/ Socio-Economic Research

All planning, including natural and cultural resource, and socio-economic research functions should be integrated into one functional group. This is essential to improve the streamlining and integration of the various planning processes and products.

d) Business Relations

A new Business Relations group should be created to effectively establish and manage partnerships with the public and private sector.

c) Human Resource Management

The Human Resource program should be broadened to include all aspects of volunteer management and staff excellence, including skill development and achievement recognition.

f) Natural and Cultural Resource Management

All natural and cultural resource research, impact assessments and activities excluding planning, should be placed in one functional group.

4) Recognizing Achievement

To date, we have operated successfully through the dedication and hard work of our highly trained and skilled staff. We must do a better job of recognizing and facilitating achievement and fostering staff commitment. Recommendations are provided to assist in achieving this goal.

a) Assignments, interchange, training and educational opportunities can be used to foster professional development in key areas.

b) Confidence and trust in our key employees needs to be demonstrated by delegating authority.

c) We can recognize achievement by enhancing the work environment of deserving employees.

d) A better job needs to be done of recognizing the importance of our front-line staff.

f) We must establish and maintain reward systems which are credible to our staff.

5. Re-aligning our Organizational Culture

Our organizational culture was examined in terms of changes in values that need to be made, some of the processes that could be used to achieve the changes, and the current myths that exist and need to be discarded. Our Task Force group found that many of our employees are incredibly committed to the Park Service's mandate. Yet, instead of proudly championing our corporate values, we seem to be defensively entrenched in them.

We suggest discarding the notion that our mission, vision and even values can go unchanged. We need to become more outward looking and less insular; we need to work effectively with our private and public-sector partners. Finally, innovation and a greater orientation to risk taking must become an appreciated value.

The Task Force recommendations must be considered promptly to maintain the momentum of the region's current strategic planning initiative. Particular attention should be directed to the recommendations concerning organizational effectiveness. We also recommend that a priority be placed on the development of a **business plan** which will assist us to judiciously allocate our scarce human and financial resources ensuring achievement of our stratetic objectives.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION AND BELIEF STATEMENT

A. Our Mission

By the year 2000, the Canadian Parks Service, Western Region, will be an innovative and forward thinking organization demonstrating leadership in heritage conservation, the management of visitor impacts, the provision of service excellence and the facilitation of high quality visitor experiences (see The Destiny Document). Realization of this vision will require many things, including our ability to effectively, confidently and creatively mange the interface between the park resources we must protect and preserve, and the people - our visitors - who use the parks.

For years many of us have talked of our dual mandate, - the great challenge of balancing the inevitable pressures for use and development against the prerequisite for protection and preservation. This notion of a dual mandate has permeated our organizational structure, planning procedures and corporate mentality.

It is time to abandon this notion and to replace it with a working understanding that we possess but one mandate which assumes many responsibilities for national parks and national historic sites - responsibilities for protection, preservation, conservation, commemoration, recreation, heritage education, tourism and so forth. These multiple responsibilities are reflected in our Mission Statement:

> **"The Western Region of the Canadian Parks Service will effectively protect and commemorate the integrity of the natural and cultural resources for which we are responsible; communicate the environmental message; demonstrate leadership in resource management; effectively motivate staff; and foster the visitation, support, and involvement of others".**

The Parks and People Task Force, one of four established to assist in achieving the Western Region's Strategic Plan, The Destiny Document, proceeded in fulfilment of the following objectives:

1. To develop recommendations for achieving the region's strategic objectives for **managing visitor impacts** and **service excellence** (Sections 2 and 3 of this report).

2. To develop recommendations for future-oriented roles for the Western Region in the areas of **environmental stewardship, tourism and out-door recreation** (Sections 4,5 and 6 of this report).

3. To provide recommendations that ensure our corporate culture, people, processes, reward systems and organizational structure effectively facilitate the foregoing (Section 7 of this report).

At the outset of our deliberations, the Task Force found it necessary to define several belief statements which became integral to all our discussions, and which are essential to understanding and supporting the Task Force recommendations. These belief statements are presented in Section B which follows.

Each of the sections containing recommendations (Sections 2 to 7) includes background material, a summary of current initiatives and issues for each topic, as well as a discussion of relevant trends. Future roles for the Western Region in environmental stewardship (including heritage education and advocacy), tourism and recreation are recommended in sections 4,5 and 6 respectively. Finally, general 5-year goals are prescribed for each topic, along with specific actions aimed at achieving the goals.

A Glossary of Terms is provided at the end of the report for reference.

B. Belief Statements are Required to define Our Region's Role and Responsibilities to Canadians and Park Visitors

The following belief statements represent the fundamental assumptions on which the Task Force members conducted their investigations and formulated recommendations. These statements represent what we consider to be forward-looking beliefs that must be espoused if the Western Region is to be relevant in the year 2000. They are consistent with the draft of the revised Canadian Parks Service policy. These statements are critical as they are the foundation for this report.

We believe that...

1. The mandate of the Canadian Parks Service is to protect nationally and internationally significant heritage resources. Within this protection mandate visitors are welcome - their impact will be managed so that the parks' ecological integrity is not compromised.

2. Canadian visitors and their guests are our most important constituents. They are essential to the continued existence of the national park system. The Canadian Parks Service has the responsibility to provide high quality and satisfying heritage experiences.

3. The public has an important role to play in the protection, conservation and stewardship of heritage resources.

4. The provision of high quality heritage experiences will foster a sense of stewardship for our parks and create positive social and economic benefits for Canadians.

5. We believe in a proactive approach involving the management of visitor impacts, high standards of visitor service, effective partnerships and new thrusts in environmental education. Our traditional approach has been passive and reactive; we have attempted to manage by regulation. Our role has not been clearly defined and this has resulted in value conflicts (internally and externally), and lost opportunities.

6. The Canadian Parks Service attracts staff who are dedicated, knowledgeable and believe in the national park mandate. We believe that our staff are integral to our success.

7. We must champion our corporate values, not remain defensively entrenched in them. Our "protectionist" corporate image must be replaced with one which is future oriented and outward-looking. We must be advocates of environmental sustainability and our national park mandate.

8. We believe that we need to take a leadership role so as to enhance our ability to foster stewardship, protect park resources, encourage appropriate use, deliver quality environmental education programs, and promote positive relations with our partners.

9. Harnessing the resources of our partners along with our own is essential to achieving our regional mission, and in particular, the protection of ecological integrity, given the resource constraints likely to be placed on the CPS.

10. In order to realize the principles of environmental sustainability, limits to growth and use must be clearly defined. This is achievable through integrated planning, a scientific approach to managing visitor impacts, fostering environmental stewardship and active partnerships.

11. In the face of fiscal restraint and new demands being placed on use, a focused and market-oriented approach to program and service delivery is essential.

SECTION 2

MANAGING VISITOR IMPACT WILL REQUIRE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF VISITORS AND MORE RIGOROUS STANDARDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Strategic Plan directs us to:

"Proactively manage the type and level of visitor impact in parks so as to ensure heritage resource protection by:

a) defining acceptable types and levels of use.
b) providing high quality environmental education."

A. Background - Sustainability and the Limits of Acceptable Change

Our priority in the Western Region is protecting and preserving heritage resources. Within the context of this priority, we must manage the impacts of visitor use appropriately. This requires proactive management, focusing our efforts, ensuring that our program impacts are positive wherever possible, insisting that any negative impacts are within tolerable levels, and rigorously mitigating any adverse impacts - all towards maintaining the integrity of the natural and cultural resources we protect and preserve.

The principle of environmental sustainability through sound management strategies is a growing pre-occupation in Canada (see Globe '90 and The Green Plan). The impetus stems from the World Conservation Strategy, the World Industry Conference on Environmental Management, and the World Commission Report on Environment and Development. Although the notion of sustainable development has been widely espoused, its acceptance within the Canadian Parks Service will continue to be constrained, not so much by the substantive principles on which it is based, but rather by semantics. We have been deterred by the word "development", fearing its pejorative connotations in our quest for ecological integrity, and the inappropriateness (to national park management) of some of the principles originally enunciated in the Brundtland report.

In general, the principles of sustainable development, however, are entirely consistent with the mandate for national parks and national historic parks. Adoption of the principles of sustainability is an essential and contemporary basis for integrating our management requirements with those of our public and private sector partners. Gordon Nelson defined sustainable development as:

> **"...the goal of maintaining resources and environment for present and future generations with equity..."**[2]

In recognition of the difficulties of accepting the notion of sustainable **"development"** in the Western region, the phrase "managing a sustainable environment" or simply "environmental sustainability" is proposed.

An implicit premise for models of sustainability is the notion that limits exist with respect to the quantity and quality of use and development. For the past 15 to 20 years, the appealing simplicity of applying the concept of environmental and social carrying capacity has been pursued without success (see: Stankey, Cole, et al., "The Limits of Acceptable Change System", 1985). A number of significant problems occur with the carrying capacity concept, notably that capacity limits vary and are dependent on management objectives, and adverse impacts are often more directly related to the types and conditions of use than the amount of use.

The answer to the question, "How much use is too much?" cannot be answered satisfactorily because it is the wrong question. The question requires a scientific response which has proven beyond the capability of anyone to provide. The proper question should be, "What are the desired and allowable conditions to be managed for given environmental and experiential considerations?". As an approach to managing visitor impacts, the notion of "**Limits of Acceptable Change**" has at least four important implications:

1. There is a shift in planning and management pre-occupation away from optimum use levels and towards desired environmental and social conditions;

2. The notion of capacity can then be used more properly in a prescriptive rather than technical context;

3. "Acceptability" becomes a matter of informed judgement involving managers, stakeholders and constituents, rather than the rigorous application of scientific formulae; and

4. The system requires that managers define desired conditions, and be accountable for undertaking actions to maintain or achieve the conditions.

The requirement for an effective and comprehensive land use zoning system is also an important aspect of managing for environmental sustainability. "National park zoning is a park management device, that is applied in response to predetermined goals, objectives, resource analysis, use potentials and use capabilities to confirm the extent of use and non-use of park landscapes" (National Park Management Planning Process. 1988). The

---

[2] Nelson, 1990, A Strategy for Tourism and Sustainable Development, presented at Globe 90.

existing system was developed in the 1960s and based on a system developed by the United States National Parks Service. A more sophisticated land use zoning approach, called the **Recreation Opportunity Spectrum** (ROS) has been developed more recently and implemented widely by the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, in Australia and most recently by the B.C. Forest Service.

ROS is an integral part of the concept of Limits of Acceptable Change. It provides a basis for describing park zones where different resource, social and management conditions are maintained. These zones serve as a basis for management objectives in specific areas of a national park. A carefully selected set of indicators are identified the various environmental and social conditions (e.g. amount of bare ground at campgrounds, frequency of bear conflicts, number of other parties encountered on hiking trails). Standards are then developed to describe the limits of acceptable change for each indicator in each land use zone.

ROS can be applied in a number of ways to act as a refinement rather than replacement of the Canadian Parks Service's five-part land use zoning system. We believe that ROS can be applied to both national parks and national historic sites. ROS can be applied in the following manner to:

1. inventory park opportunities currently available;

2. plan for the provision and allocation of a range of appropriate park opportunities;

3. identify the consequences of management approaches and decisions on those opportunities;

4. match the experiences that visitors are seeking with what is available; and

5. monitor any resource impairment that results from use and ensure that objectives for resource protection and visitor satisfaction are met.

Both the LAC and ROS appear to have great potential for managing visitor impacts. Their application in the Western Region will need to be reviewed critically, to ensure that they can, in fact, provide an effective contribution to the streamlining and integration of our planning processes..

B. In 1990 We Are Not Effectively Managing Visitor Impact

In this section we examine important initiatives and issues presently facing the Western Region with respect to the management of visitor impacts. An evaluation of the current strengths and weaknesses, along with anticipated trends to be encountered over the next ten

years (also referred to as opportunities and threats), provides the basis for the future-oriented recommendations that follow.

Planning Procedures

1. We have a variety of processes by which we plan and endeavour to limit adverse visitor impacts; the Natural Resource Management Planning Process, the Visitor Activity Management Planning Process, the Park Management Planning Process, and the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process (EARP). The management planning process is intended to integrate the information resulting from the co-ordinated application of the former two processes. Application of our planning processes, despite recent improvements, still lacks full and effective organizational integration and staff commitment (e.g. park staff participate on planning teams as an added responsibility rather than as a significant work responsibility of their position). EARP, while intended as a planning tool, remains primarily a reactive process for assessing project-specific impacts and identifying mitigative responses.

2. Based on our performance, we lack confidence in the planning processes we apply and in the decisions that result. Consequently we rely on data-intensive and time-consuming investigations that preclude strategic and flexible management approaches. Our planning is excessively issue-driven rather than future-oriented.

3. We deal with individual impacts rather than managing cumulative and incremental potential impacts. The only opportunity we currently possess to identify and manage cumulative and incremental impacts on any real basis occurs through the management planning process. As it is presently applied, the management planning process is inadequate for the identification and management of cumulative and incremental impacts.

4. We have failed to acknowledge that decisions are made, at least in part, on the basis of political and economic parameters (e.g. until recently we insisted that tourism was an incidental consequence of national park establishment; consequently we failed to deal with tourism pressures in a comprehensive manner). As a result, we feel victimized by our inability to participate effectively in decisions concerning land use issues.

5. Our land use zoning system is crude, outmoded and ineffective. Consequently, land use plans are not used as a significant management tool in allocating priorities for the protection and use of park lands. Zoning is now used to regulate existing land-use patterns,rather than manage land uses so as to ensure the protection of heritage resource integrity.

6. We have demonstrated difficulty in determining appropriate levels of use, except in certain backcountry settings. Once we have arrived at a decision about appropriate types and levels of use, we allow ourselves to be forced to constantly revisit the decision. This is due, in part, to a lack of confidence in the decision-making processes we employ, (e.g. the Sunshine issue, the Ukrainian Pioneer Home, the Jasper and Banff airstrips).

Working with Partners

7. We do not work effectively with our private-sector partners. Consequently we often see ourselves as adversarial victims of development pressures (e.g. Glacier Park Lodge, Maligne Lake Boat Tours, or the Elk Island beach concession).

8. We do not work with our public-sector partners proactively. We have yet to effectively and comprehensively integrate our planning and management activities with those of our regional partners (e.g. Tourism Alberta and Tourism Canada promote our national parks as major tourism destinations and the CPS is only peripherally involved).

9. We are at a particular disadvantage when dealing with our private-sector partners, because application of our various planning and administrative processes is excessively slow and cumbersome.

Approaches to the Management of Visitor Impacts

10. We have failed to develop a focused approach to the provision of park experiences and opportunities. Consequently, we have no focused strategy for managing the visitor who create impact.

11. We have failed to remain current in applying tools for managing visitor impact. For instance, we tend to regulate visitor use in preference to fostering a strong sense of environmental stewardship.

C. Future Trends Will Make the Proactive Management of Visitor Impact Essential

An analysis of anticipated trends over the next ten years is essential in developing an understanding of the Western Region's future requirements for visitor impact management

(see also Future Trends Affecting the Western Region, 1990). We describe the trends and their implications in the paragraphs that follow.

1. Visitation levels to our parks will continue to increase.

   Recreational demand and tourism are expected to increase to the year 2000, placing new pressures on the CPS to protect and preserve resources and ensure quality visitor experiences.

2. Canadians will demand more opportunities and experiences of their national and national historic parks.

   An essential step in the management of visitor impacts will be a sophisticated understanding of visitor needs and clear decisions on what experiences and opportunities are appropriate. This will involve working with our public and private sector partners to ensure that common goals can be achieved.

3. The CPS will increasingly be accountable for the delivery of departmental and government-wide programs - such as the Green Plan and various tourism initiatives.

   The Western Region will be unable to operate effectively and remain relevant if it chooses to remain insular, maintaining an inward and proprietary focus on the lands we manage. We must conduct our business and be accountable in a much bigger world. At the same time we must not lose sight of our mandate and priorities.

4. Base-level funding will at best remain constant, but most likely continue to decrease. Declining financial allocation will provide a challenging impetus for a new management style. The Western Region will need to:

   - be creative and innovative in all aspects of doing business;
   - foster and maintain partnerships which assist in achieving our mandate;
   - use our strong environmental mandate for political and financial leverage; and
   - focus the delivery of our programs and services.

5. Adjacent land uses will continue to encroach on the ecological integrity of our parks.

   The Science and Protection Task Force identified encroachment as the single largest threat to the ecological integrity of the Western Region national

parks. Consequently, we will be required to manage visitor impacts by effectively involving our regional partners. If we are to build regional support for our Mission, we must be viewed externally as an active and cooperative partner with a mandate of national significance.

6. The CPS will increasingly be expected to provide leadership in fostering environmental stewardship, and maintenance of ecological integrity.

   This trend implies that we are being handed a unique opportunity to become leaders in managing visitor impact. Coupled with the growing threats to our parks, this is an opportunity we would wish to capitalize on.

7. Visitors and our partners will become more ethnically diverse, bringing with them a wide range of cultural values.

   Our management approaches must be based on an understanding of these diverse cultural values if they are to be effective. For instance, the cultural values of our Japanese private sector partners must be understood if we expect to work with them and to manage visitor impacts.

The primary consequence of these trends is that effective, sophisticated, and integrated approaches to managing visitor impact must be developed. In addition, proactive roles for managing our private and public-sector partners will be required.

D. New Framework for Managing Visitor Impact is Needed to Meet Future Challenges

The recommendations and action statements that follow are based on a careful assessment of the strengths and weaknesses identified for 1990, and the threats and opportunities we face in 2000. They are broad strategies for responding to the challenges of managing visitor impact in the future. Managing environmental sustainability under the rubric of the Limits of Acceptable Change provides a potentially innovative framework for integrating our efforts. The actions that follow each recommendation represent some specific action-oriented suggestions for achieving the goals. This format is followed through Sections 2 to 6 of this report.

E. Recommendations

Recommendation 2.1

In 5 years we will be leaders in managing visitor impacts by using principles of environmental sustainability. The key principles are:

- ***Maintenance of ecological and cultural integrity,***
- ***the equitable management of non-consumptive resource uses among present and future users,***
- ***an effective program for participation and consultation among all interested stakeholders and constituents,***
- ***a recognition of and ability to manage the effects of incremental and cumulative impacts,***
- ***an effective and comprehensive land use zoning system,***
- ***planning strategically based on policy and economic analyses, environmental and social impact assessments, and effective mechanisms for land use zoning,***
- ***the recognition that there are limits to the amounts and types of acceptable use,***
- ***fostering environmental stewardship through environmental education, advocacy and training with our public and private sector partners, park visitors and politicians,***
- ***recognizing that providing high quality service to our visitors is a prerequisite to fostering environmental stewardship and constituency support.***
- ***developing a full understanding of our public and private sector partners, and establishing effective partnerships in support of common notions of visitor impact management,***
- ***regular monitoring of the environmental, social and economic impacts of visitor use,***
- ***integrated and coordinated planning and plan implementation with our regional and provincial public sector partners,***

- *making our private-sector partners fully accountable for their actions by providing effective direction and control (including effective methods to manage the environmental conduct of all leaseholders), and*

- *linking scientific research and meaningful public consultation in the decision-making process.*

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 2.1

- Establish a Standing Committee of RMC to ensure the full development and implementation of the principles for realizing environmental sustainability. The standing committee would refine the parameters for sustainability, and report annually in the State-of-the-Parks Report. Working groups would be established as required.

- Conduct additional investigations into relevant components of the principles of sustainability.

- Develop a training and communications strategy to explain the principles of environmental sustainability and its benefits for proactively managing visitor impacts.

- Ensure the full participation of interested stakeholders in the development and implementation of a management approach based on the principles of sustainability.

- Select a new developing national park (e.g. South Moresby/Gwaii Haanas) and one established national or national historic park upon which to test and refine the model.

- Implement an environmental audit which assesses all internal management processes to ensure that all activities and actions foster and demonstrate the principles of sustainability.

Recommendation - 2.2

Within three years the Western Region will have integrated the system for defining Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) and the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) into our planning processes as the basis for managing levels and types of use, by:

- *Identifying future trends and current planning concerns based on environmental, public, recreational, development or adjacent land use criteria,*

- *defining and describing a range of park opportunity zones (recreational opportunity classes in the USFS system) based on acceptable resource and social conditions,*
- *selecting indicators of desired resource and social conditions appropriate to each park opportunity zone,*
- *inventory the resource and social conditions in the park or park area based on the measurable indicators,*
- *identifying measurable standards for resource and social indicators for each opportunity zone,*
- *identifying alternative park opportunity zone allocations reflecting park issues and concerns, existing conditions (resource and social), anticipated future conditions and strategic priorities,*
- *identifying required management actions for each alternative park zone allocation,*
- *evaluating and selecting the preferred alternative(s), and*
- *implementing actions and monitor conditions.*

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 2.2

- Establish a task force to evaluate in detail and make recommendations concerning the applicability of implementing the concepts of limits of acceptable change, the recreational opportunity spectrum to the western region, and required changes to the zoning system.

  As part of the task force recommendations, the years of experience gained by the U.S. Forest service, the U.S. Bureau of land management and others should be considered in detail. Consideration should be given to a pilot project, involving the application of modified versions of these concepts.

- If the task force recommendations are accepted, establish a standing and inter-disciplinary committee to ensure the coordinated integration of the limits of acceptable change and the recreational opportunity spectrum and to monitor the effectiveness of its application. These concepts should be adopted only if they can contribute to the streamlining and integration of our planning processes.

SECTION 3

SERVICE EXCELLENCE IS THE KEY TO MAINTAINING PUBLIC SUPPORT AND FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The strategic plan directs us to:

> **"Maintain the high standards of visitor services, facilities and experiences provided by us and others by:**
>
> **a) Ensuring that a commitment to service excellence is used in the planning and provision of visitor services, facilities and experiences;**
>
> **b) identifying the levels and types of service which must be provided;**
>
> **c) ensuring that all staff share the responsibility for providing high quality park experiences."**

A. Background - The Public Sector is Service

The service sector of the Canadian economy is now larger than any other sector and continued growth is forecasted. By the year 2000 it is expected that service sector employment will represent nearly 70% of the Canadian labour market. This continued growth will be accentuated by a number of social trends such as the demand for service excellence and value for money, the information explosion and the expansion of innovative technology.

Consumers will demand more for less, not only from manufacturers and retailers but also from all levels of government. The performance of both the public and private sector will be measured by the quality of the goods produced and the service and value added to those goods. This perception of quality will be based less on the physical attributes of a product and more on intangibles such as quality consistency, the nature and quality of personal services, and the maintenance of high standards. Understanding the key attributes of service excellence will be essential for success.

For the public sector, an understanding of the service marketing strategies is essential because, in a nutshell, the public sector is service! The fact that the delivery of public sector services is primarily driven by social values and non-financial objectives emphasises the need to integrate the delivery of service excellence with an operating strategy.

The Public Service 2000 task force report on service to the public contains a fundamentally new strategy for public service delivery based on the following:

1. A top management commitment to shaping culture and values.

2. Shaping policy and service to client needs by consulting with clients.

3. Improving the manner in which public servants are managed.

4. Organizing for client services.

5. Effectively using service support technology.

6. On-going internal and external monitoring.

The multitude of stakeholders and constituents, accentuated by the reduction in fiscal and human resources, points to the need for a focused strategy with clearly defined service objectives. This service concept and operating strategy must be designed so that the perceived value of a service, as viewed by the visitor, is greater than the cost to supply the service. An example of where we have missed the point was the add-on fee for firewood. We have spent years studying a "chicken-feed" issue, totally ignoring the implications from a service excellence perspective. Our task will be to match the delivery system to the abilities, intent, needs and values of the visitor.

In considering a commitment to service excellence, there is a need to consider not only our visitors, but also our public and private sector partners. Finally, our service commitment needs to apply internally within the Western Region. The following discussion and recommendations focus, however, on our primary client - the residents of Canada. As an organization, we must be managed for performance, based not so much on measures of efficiency as on effectiveness. This will require defining:

1. What is our business and what should it be?

2. Developing clear goals and objectives.

3. Establishing priorities and creating accountability agreements for delivery of priority items.

4. Establishing measurements of performance.

5. Monitoring performance and making adjustments as appropriate.

6. Establishing objectives and managing for results.

The key question for the Canadian Parks Service in the nineties will not be "what business are we in?" but "what business do people think we are in?". The goals of achieving constituency support and a dedicated sense of stewardship are predicated on service excellence. We can not expect support for our mandate if we have dissatisfied visitors. Since there are no warranties, it is essential to get it right the first time.

Working with our private and public sector partners can allow the Western Region to redeploy limited financial and human resources to meet our strategic priorities, and to concentrate our energies on those things we do best. It is also a recognition that others may be better equipped, in certain cases, to deliver service excellence.

Contracting-out selected services and facilities presently provided by the CPS may be one cost-effective response to resource constraints. Significant levels of contracting-out have occurred in British Columbia's and Ontario's provincial parks. We have conducted a cursory review of the results and can report mixed results. In some cases, public reaction has been negative. In Alberta, for example, plans to contract-out the operation of Kananaskis country campgrounds have been criticized by environmentalists as, "another example of the government selling out to private business". At the federal level, the Public Service Staff Relations Board recently issued a decision which may impact on the right of the Federal Public Service to contract out. The decision, if upheld, would have the effect of precluding a contracting-out option if indeterminate employees are "affected".

The Western Region has pursued contracting-out the operation of campgrounds and swimming pools. Contracting-out warrants further consideration under the following parameters:

1. Business expertise is required to negotiate, monitor and manage agreements involving private sector partners.

2. Standards for levels of service need to be identified to ensure the maintenance of service quality.

3. Policies need to be developed to determine recapitalization responsibilities during the term of an agreement.

4. The CPS must pursue the contracting-out option only in circumstances involving a competitive market to ensure cost effectiveness.

5. Restrictive Treasury Board controls on Capital and O & M resources need to be removed if contracting-out is to be an effective option.

6. Agreements involving ill-defined or split operational responsibilities between the CPS and the private sector should be avoided.

7. A spirit of partnership, rather than a private-sector attitude of exploitation and a public-sector attitude of myopic self-interest, is critical to success. Contracting-out must be a win-win situation for all parties.

B. At Present the CPS is Not Well Positioned to Provide Service Excellence

In reviewing our present performance, we found that our staff take great pride in serving visitors, and that our visitors are generally satisfied with the job that we do. Although we do many good things, the Western Region has a long way to go to become a top-notch service institution. Some of our present weaknesses are identified below.

1. We lag behind in knowledge and development in the field of service excellence, service standards, service marketing and monitoring (e.g. our region's modest but successful Hospitality Training Program is no longer funded).

2. We have few effective measures of visitor satisfaction. Our current information tells us that visitors are generally satisfied with the level of service delivery, which is a strength to build upon. Trends tell us that we will lose constituents to competitors unless we can better respond to changing needs and ensure service excellence.

3. The experiences offered in different parks are not consciously differentiated. The parks are not capitalizing on their distinctive attributes and are tending toward uniformity. Service excellence occurs when specific strengths are capitalized upon.

4. We have not fostered values of service excellence into the organization. Our staff do not equate service excellence as a crucial basis for managing visitor impacts.

5. While Service Planning has forced us to think more from a visitor's perspective, we have not integrated this fully into other planning processes.

6. We operate under the following assumptions, which typify our organizational culture:

   - Of course we believe in service excellence.
   - If we didn't have visitors, we wouldn't have a problem.
   - The hospitality program did that for us.
   - It's a policy problem.
   - Service excellence is for business, our job is parks.
   - It's not my department.

- We can't afford to train staff, we can't provide it unless we get bigger training budgets.
- How can you expect to provide service excellence when we keep losing our budget
- What the visitor needs is...
- You can't measure service, service is an intangible.

7. We don't use service excellence as a criterion for rationalizing resource allocations.

8. We often fail to consider that private sector clients are also our visitors, and that both private sector and CPS service offerings reflect on the total park experience. We don't recognize the important role of stakeholders in providing quality services to our visitors.

9. The CPS needs to improve its monitoring of service delivery by our private sector partners.

10. We have missed opportunities for enhancing the park experience by not working with the travel and hospitality industry, and the private sector in general.

11. We tend to forget that the park experience begins well before the visitor arrives in the park and ends well after they return home. It is often part of a broader travel or leisure experience, which implies that service excellence needs to be part of a total travel package.

12. There are limited internal rewards for service excellence. Although we have staff who are motivated and willing to innovate and improve on the delivery, current processes, guidelines and directives often impede initiative.

13. Authority and responsibility to use judgment in support of service quality is not often delegated or defined for front line staff (e.g. staff are deterred from bending rules to improve visitor satisfaction).

14. We lag behind the tourism industry in the use of technology to enhance service quality, especially for assisting visitors plan their trips to parks (e.g. reservation systems).

15. We lack service quality standards to allow for meaningful functional reviews.

16. Finally, we don't bother to tell the public and our visitors about the many exciting things that we do well (e.g. we defy any rational human being to find our excellent research reports).

C. In the Future There Will be a Growing Need to Concentrate on Service Excellence

An analysis of future trends indicates the need for the Western Region to be committed to the delivery of service excellence. Service excellence will be the most effective mechanism to achieve constituency support for our programs and for fostering a sense of environmental stewardship.

1. The trend is toward seeking integrated experiences, the need for novelty and change, and the search for the exotic.

   Visitor needs and the benefits they seek will must be clearly understood. CPS programs and services will need to provide integrated experiences in cooperation with our partners. Each park will need to promote the distinctiveness and variety of experiences they offer.

2. There will be increasing demand for high quality service, both from the private and public sectors.

   We will have to ensure that visitors are treated as valued guests. We must ensure that their expectations are met or exceeded.

3. There will be increasing competition for visitors' attention.

   National parks will need to maintain relevance and a distinctive position in the public's mind. As environmental awareness increases there will be many comparable conservation and environmental issues competing for public attention. There will be an increasing number of recreational opportunities. This means that we will need to understand how the public perceives us.

   Recreational activities are becoming more specialised and providers are attempting to fill particular niches. We will not be able to afford to be all things to all people. Therefore, we will need to become focused on those things that we do best and are central to our mandate.

4. There will be an increasingly complex and pressure filled society.

   The response to this complexity is to seek travel products which are convenient. Vacations are becoming shorter and more frequent. Park visitors will be seeking simple, relaxing and stress-free experiences. Delivering on service excellence will become the key public measure of the job that we do.

5. Aging population.

   The well off older folks demand value for money; they have the time and money to travel. They will be seeking the travel experience which meets their specific needs and they are willing to pay a premium price for quality experiences. Convenience and minimal hassle are important. Travel products must cater to their changing demands. These demands will include more educational experiences and greater convenience.

6. Increase in the use of automation and technology.

   The use of automation will increase convenience and assist the traveller in making travel plans. Automation is not usually cost effective - its benefits are primarily value-added and convenient to the visitor. Technology potentially allows visitors to be more informed about park and regional opportunities and permits the CPS to link with other (e.g. provincial, private sector) information networks.

7. The decline in disposable income among North Americans.

   Visitors will be looking for the best deal for their dollar. North Americans will be taking inexpensive vacations closer to home. The foreign travel market is likely to increase in relation to North Americans. These visitors have different and varying expectations from the North American traveller, which must be considered in planning and delivering services.

8. Peoples' leisure time is increasingly fragmented and the markets will become increasingly segmented as the Canadian population changes.

   Double income households and mixed families have resulted in increased difficulty in coordinating vacation time, and as a result convenience is important. Couples may tend to take separate vacations.

   Services will have to be targeted to well-defined market segments. With women becoming a larger part of the workforce, for example, they will have more influence on travel decisions and may have specialized needs such as enhanced security.

9. Growing service industry employment.

   This will lead to greater expertise in the management of service delivery, better understanding of critical success factors like customer satisfaction and service standards, and a more critical appreciation of what services institutions ought to provide. There will be increased opportunities for the CPS to tap into this growing knowledge base and labour pool.

D. Recommendations

Based on the foregoing examination of the current situation and anticipated trends, the Task Force believes that a fundamental shift in the Western Region's values is required with respect to service excellence. It will become critical for the CPS to deliver on service excellence if we are to maintain or build our constituency base.

Recommendation - 3.1

In 5 years, we will be recognized by our visitors as leaders in service excellence within the public sector. Our program will be guided by principles which:

- *demonstrate a sound understanding of visitors' service needs, levels of current and desired satisfaction. These service principles must be responsive to changing visitor needs;*
- *identify and provides distinctive park experiences and associated services, facilities and programs;*
- *are market-driven and match quality services to target markets;*
- *use service quality as a criterion to rationalize resource allocation for facility management and service delivery;*
- *optimize the use of financial and human resources;*
- *take advantage of available technology to maximize convenience in planning and enjoying trips;*
- *are delivered through the entire trip cycle;*
- *demonstrate credible expertise in current theories and strategies for achieving service excellence;*
- *make staff and managers at all levels responsible for service excellence;*
- *achieve a balance between standardized and customized service;*
- *encourage CPS to work with partners to achieve park and region-wide service excellence;*

- *acknowledge significant contributions and innovations in service excellence and motivate staff to continue with high quality service delivery; and*
- *involve the public in the design of services and facilities.*

Actions Required to Achieve Recommendation 3.1

Planning Tools

- Carry out a region-wide market research program to determine the importance of various service elements to significant market segments.
- Establish regional capacity, use, service, satisfaction and maintenance standards for visitor facilities.

Management Methods

- Incorporate service-excellence values into the CPS, western region organization, through means such as:
  - Implementing a service-excellence program (including on-going service excellence training and improved job/park orientation for new staff) within each park which applies to all functions, is directed toward coordinating service delivery and increasing visitor satisfaction.
  - Implementing a WRO service excellence program, aimed at improving the quality of service delivery to staff in our national and national historic parks.
  - Implementing a recognition program which acknowledges significant contributions in innovation and dedication to service excellence, for staff and partners.
  - Seeking a commitment to service excellence when hiring managers and staff.
  - Intensifying training for senior managers to enable them to direct and evaluate service excellence programs.

- Implement revenue plans and pricing strategies for all classes and types of facilities which maximize revenue generation, consistent with visitor satisfaction.

- Use automated systems in situations where there is considerable repetition of information distribution and take advantage of travel industry networks where such opportunities exist, in order to ensure the most effective deployment of human resources.

- Require each cost centre manager to spend at least one week per year working as a front-line staff member; and front-line staff to spend one week working with a cost centre manager.

- Establish procedures and guidelines for the delegation of responsibility and authority for service excellence to the lowest possible level in the organization (front-line staff).

Partnerships

- establish a visitor's advisory group or special focus groups to assist in the design of visitor services and facilities.

- Apply a credible certification program for recreation and environmental education leaders (e.g. tour boat operators, outfitters, ACC camps, bicycle tour leaders,etc.) which fosters service excellence.

- Establish a strategy for developing cooperative business ventures by contracting-out selected park facilities. The strategy should contain:

    - Criteria for selection of contracting-out candidates which ensure service to the public is increased, operating cots are decreased and opportunities for our employees are maximized.

    - A priorized list of candidates for contracting-out.

    - Guidelines for achieving, managing and monitoring contracting-out initiatives.

    - The objective of establishing models of success to build upon.

Monitoring Service Excellence

- Implement a comprehensive service quality monitoring program, on a consistent basis across all parks. This could include visitor surveys, informal focus groups, post-trip letters and other monitoring strategies.

SECTION 4

THE CPS MUST PLAY A MORE OUTWARD LOOKING ROLE IN PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP THROUGH HERITAGE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

The Strategic Plan directs us to:

> **"Promote and advocate the philosophy of environmental stewardship with the public and CPS staff by:**
>
> **a) making the public, our partners and staff aware of the important benefits of environmental protection;**
> **b) devising innovative methods for both the Parks Service and our partners to expand heritage presentation programs to serve a larger audience;**
> **c) promoting pride, awareness, understanding and stewardship of Canadian heritage through targeted, high quality education programs."**

A. Background - New Challenges

Environmental stewardship is not just communicating ecological principals or biological facts with a new twist. Rather, it must be a pervasive and unified philosophy of resource management aimed at defining, maintaining and enhancing environmental quality. Environmental stewardship must therefore be the driving force and guide behind our everyday actions. Fostering environmental stewardship is a primary mechanism for managing visitor impacts. The priority for this approach is communicated in the Green Plan.

> **"Clearly we are going to have to change some of our most deeply ingrained assumptions and habits if we are to live up to our responsibilities as stewards of a large portion of the world's environment, and continue to enjoy the quality of life to which we have become accustomed".**

The CPS must not only be a model of environmental quality, other must see the benefits of this philosophy and want to model their actions after us. Stewardship is "leading by example".

The Green Plan contains a statement that environmental stewardship will require "improved decision making including better science, environmental information and education....The

object is to create an environmentally educated population which demands that all sectors of society meet a high level of environmental responsibility." This objective calls upon the CPS to review its traditional interpretation and information programs. While there will never be any substitute for experiencing our parks first hand, the fundamental challenge for us will be to project the social value of the national parks concept into the public mind with such intensity that it becomes real and relevant not only for park visitors but for those who will never visit the parks. This is an enormous task which will require focused energies, targeted messages, new skills within the organization, and leveraging opportunities through partnerships. The Western Region has been presented with a unique opportunity to take a lead role in fostering environmental stewardship throughout Western Canada.

B. In 1990 We are Not Doing Enough to Foster Environmental Stewardship

At present, the Western Region is not well positioned to capitalize on the unique opportunity before us. A number of the current initiatives and issues are identified in the following section.

1. We have world class opportunities and assets for the provision of environmental education programs.

2. A variety of services are provided, including: in-park personal interpretation services and out of park presentations; park awareness and pre-trip planning; park orientation and information; on-site non-personal interpretation; public consultation; and public affairs programs. Fostering environmental stewardship is a secondary or indirect consequence of these programs and is not seen as part of the total park experience.

3. The CPS has high public esteem and credibility on which environmental education programming can be developed.

4. We have traditionally emphasized personal park programs and have done little to reach people in urban centres, notably Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton. Our involvement with educational and environmental research institutions is minimal. As a result, we are not perceived to be particularly relevant in the environmental education area.

5. The Canadian Parks Service has not clearly articulated its role in environmental education. We attempt to promote careful use of park resources, but not a broad sense of environmental stewardship, by using environmental education as a bridge between preservation and use. National parks are but representations of larger ecological units. We have focused only on the park and lost sight of their role in the bigger picture.

6. Interpretation is seen as a sub-activity rather than as an effective tool for conveying environmental messages. Our perspective is that "education" is a provincial responsibility.

7. The Canadian Parks Service has not properly responded to the specialization of education (eg. outdoor, heritage and continuing education).

8. There are few national, regional or park-specific strategies or program frameworks for heritage education. Where park plans exist with heritage education components, there has been a sporadic commitment to implementation.

9. The Canadian Parks Service has not actively pursued potential avenues for delivering our messages and leveraging our effectiveness through partnerships and targeting audiences.

10. Program planning and delivery is fragmented by organizational structure. Current programs are functionally driven, often with little consultation, planning or cooperation among the various sub-activities.

11. There is little consistency in content of educational programming from park to park, but there is a duplication of a narrow range of park-specific themes.

12. No broad program evaluation exists, feedback is sporadic and site specific. There is little agreement among interpreters on delivery standards.

13. The content and format of our publications is not clearly related to user needs; distribution is very poor and the publication program lacks overall effectiveness.

14. Our staff have high education levels and skills. They are also incredibly dedicated, loyal and many have strong personal values associated with environmental stewardship.

15. Frequently, our employees with a high level of knowledge on a subject are not the ones who deliver or develop park programs (e.g. the park warden doing bear research may not play a key role in developing bear programs). We don't put our best or most experienced people in front of the public.

C. Several Major Trends Will Affect the Future Direction of the CPS in Promoting Environmental Stewardship

Trends indicate that during the next 10 years, a new and sophisticated approach will be required if the Western Region is to effectively foster environmental stewardship. Several major trends and their implications are discussed in the following section.

1. Visitors will be seeking an increase in the educational component of their park experiences.

   Overall this presents an exceptional opportunity for us to communicate environmental education messages to a receptive public and to foster environmental stewardship.

2. Entertainment stimuli are increasing, and people are looking for involvement.

   The Canadian Parks Service's programs must be designed with flexibility in order to allow for information to be easily updated. Programs must be packaged, and where possible provide distinctive experiences which capitalize on the impact of the natural and cultural settings we protect. Two avenues must be explored in response to this trend - providing more sophisticated programs or allowing people to escape the high-tech world when they are in the parks.

3. The world's knowledge base is increasing very rapidly.

   The CPS must alter its program orientation to remain relevant, and aim them at a more knowledgeable audience.

4. There will be higher proportions of visitors from Asia and Europe. Additionally, Canada's ethnicity is changing.

   The Canadian Parks Service must ensure that the values and needs of the various groups visiting Parks are understood and accounted for in programming.

D. New and Innovative Roles for Environmental Education and Environmental Advocacy are Needed to Foster Environmental Stewardship

This Task Force focused on two tools for building a sense of environmental stewardship - environmental education and advocacy (see definitions in Glossary). The future role of environmental education moves beyond traditional interpretation programming, while advocacy is an entirely new role for us. We believe these new roles would take the region in exciting new directions and are critical for us to meet the objectives of the Green Plan and the Destiny Document.

An Innovative Role for Environmental Education:

The national and historic parks and sites in Western Region will be recognized and acknowledged as the premiere sites for experiencing and learning about Canada's natural and cultural resources in authentic settings.

The Canadian Parks Service will, together with others, promote pride in, awareness, understanding and stewardship of Canadian heritage through targeted, cost-effective, high quality educational programs.

We will become credible leaders in environmental stewardship by educating through example.

A New Role for Environmental Advocacy:

The Canadian Parks Service, Western Region will be recognized and acknowledged as an important advocate for environmental stewardship, sustainable use, and the CPS mandate. We will have established strong and consistent relationships with advocacy groups and advocacy minded individuals having similar aims. We will advocate environmental stewardship and the principles of sustainable development on lands adjacent to park boundaries.

E. Recommendations

Recommendation 4.1

In order to move toward meeting our future role in environmental education, we must implement a creative, integrated and high quality program within Western Region, which:

- *Communicates messages which are relevant, provoke thought and reveal meaning and relationships about our natural and cultural heritage (including the federal environmental agenda and global environmental issues);*
- *demonstrates a leadership role in implementing new and innovative techniques for environmental education;*
- *reaches a targeted cross-section of the public with environmental education messages;*
- *monitors the effectiveness of our environmental education program;*
- *seeks and promotes opportunities for partnerships in environmental education through in-park and outreach programs;*
- *is an integral part of the park experience;*
- *achieves a high level of awareness toward environmental stewardship on the part of CPS staff and partners; and*
- *maintains our expertise, credibility and knowledge of heritage resource.*

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 4.1

The following list contains a sample of actions which may be taken over the short and long term, to help us reach our 5-year goal.

Planning Tools

- Conduct an assessment of current communications services, products and delivery in the region.
- Develop a communications strategy to define contemporary messages, target audiences and most effective methods of delivery.

- Develop a set of guidelines and common messages for the delivery of environmental education programs in National Parks and National Historic Sites.

Partnerships

- Seek and promote opportunities for partnerships in environmental education and outreach programs. Concentrate our energies on developing programs (e.g. Edukits) for others to deliver.
- Establish an environmental education council, to promote and coordinate the delivery of messages.
- Establish a national parks education foundation for fund-raising, lobbying and development of educational media, as well as liaison with other agencies and the private sector.
- Develop and implement joint ventures with education faculties at major post-secondary institutions.
- Actively participate in major education organizations (e.g. Continuing education councils, university faculties of education and extension).

Management Methods

- Through on-going programs, ensure that all staff are aware of key environmental education messages.
- Seek a commitment to environmental stewardship during staff hiring.
- Implement a recognition program which acknowledges leadership, innovation and excellence in environmental education, for staff and partners.
- Acquire professional skills in environmental education, such as curriculum development, educational psychology.

Monitoring Effectiveness

- Monitor the effectiveness of education programs in terms of exposure to environmental education messages and improved attitudes toward the environment.

- Improve and develop on-going mechanisms for gathering information on the effectiveness of education programs (including a survey current users and non-users of heritage education programs).

Recommendation - 4.2

In order to move toward our future environmental advocacy role, within five years, we must be implementing and monitoring an advocacy program which:

- *Supports the regional strategic objectives;*
- *improves public attitudes toward the environment and encourages action toward environmental stewardship;*
- *is integrated with other Federal Government initiatives (e.g. acid rain reduction, global warming);*
- *uses a wide range of partnerships to achieve mutual objectives (e.g. with CPAWS, cooperating associations, Chambers of Commerce);*
- *is targeted to selected Canadian and foreign audiences posing threats to the parks, or those which maximize program effectiveness;*
- *strengthens the CPS constituency and builds effective coalitions in anticipation of threats or opportunities;*
- *builds networks which act as effective early warning systems for issues, problems and future trends affecting the CPS and act as a sounding board for Western Region plans and policies; and*
- *is based on understanding the perspectives of others, and identifying negotiating room for change.*

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 4.2

The first and second actions are long term initiatives, while the remaining actions can be carried out immediately without waiting for the longer term strategy.

- Develop a regional policy and a long-term strategy for environmental advocacy.

- Identify relevant messages, target audiences, delivery systems and monitor the effectiveness of the program.
- Establish an Employee Speaker's Bureau targeted at specific constituents, public opinion makers and others.
- Establish an advocacy network which assists current National Historic Site and National Park Advocacy Groups (e.g. CPAWS, AWA, CNF, CWF) in the development and delivery of their advocacy programs.
- Jointly sponsor an expert speaker's program in support of environmental stewardship.
- Use the participation newsletter more effectively to promote environmental advocacy among staff.
- Build a profile and awareness for Parks Day and other events (e.g. breakfast with the grizzlies), and capitalize on these initiatives.
- Capitalize on suitable public service promotion opportunities (e.g. grocery bags, milk cartons).
- Recruit opinion leaders to speak out on behalf of environmental stewardship.

SECTION 5

LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS REQUIRED TO MEET RESOURCE PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS AND PkOVIDE APPROPRIATE PARK EXPERIENCES

A. Background - The Tourism Industry

Tourism is the world's largest industry and is expected to grow at a rate of four percent annually in the foreseeable future. In Alberta alone it generates $2.2 billion dollars annually for the economy. However, tourism is more than economics. It is an activity that crosses the boundaries of business, leisure, recreation and education.

CPS Policy defines our tourism product as:

> **"those places which are significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage...and encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways which leave them unimpaired..."**

From the visitor's point of view the environmental, economic and social benefits of parks and tourism are in many instances one and the same. In fact, the goals of conserving and presenting heritage resources, satisfying individual physical and psychological needs and providing economic benefits are not mutually exclusive.

The challenge and the opportunity for the Western Region will be to accept our role in the tourism industry. Our position and contribution will need to be precisely defined, communicated and agreed upon by all partners. We have much to contribute to the tourism industry besides the opportunity to experience our natural and cultural heritage. We can bring to our tourism partners a sense of environmental stewardship, enhanced planning and policy skills and opportunities to deliver service excellence. In order to manage tourism for environmental sustainability, we will have to pursue common objectives with the private sector. Tourism is often promoted as an environmentally clean industry. We know this is not necessarily so, and hence the priority to work with our tourism partners. Only by assuming a leadership role can we manage effective partnerships.

B. In 1990 We React to Tourism Initiatives

The Western Region has demonstrated great difficulty in agreeing on its role in the tourism industry. We walk down Banff Avenue and talk of the need to provide only essential goods and services, uneasily ignoring store after store catering to virtually every whim of the

tourist trade. There is a discrepancy between the way we wish things to be and reality. Our current initiatives and some of the issues related to tourism are presented below.

1. The Canadian Parks Service provides many varied amenities for its visitors which facilitate tourism, but we are not perceived internally or externally as being a partner in the tourism industry. This is because we have never articulated our tourism role.

2. Tourism is viewed as a consequence of the Canadian Parks Service doing its job well. Tourism is a resulting benefit of national parks. Other government agencies are promoters, distributors and developers of our product, yet we have little control or opportunity for input. We have often chosen to be reactive in our dealings with the tourism industry. As reactionaries we are not effectively managing visitor impact.

3. Current programs related to the tourism industry are considered to be incidental to the national parks' mandate. Tourism contacts by the Canadian Parks Service are typified as informal and infrequent. We have never actively sought appropriate partnerships.

4. Despite the fact that visiting cultural sites is a major travel impetus, our historic parks and sites have not been able to capitalize on their potential because of the scope and scale of presentation. They remain low-key and local attractions.

5. The measures of success are different for the Canadian Parks Service and private tourism operators. While both address social values and needs, tourism operators use economic measures to determine success on the basis of intangibles. Not always talking the same language as the tourism industry has led to mistrust.

6. Within our corporate culture, tourists are often seen as a threat and nuisance. Consequently, we often refer to them in derogatory terms.

7. We have not defined our markets, and therefore cannot channel our own activities, and certainly not those of our partners, toward appropriate markets.

8. We have not traditionally seen the Canadian Parks Service as part of the larger mandate of the Federal Government, which recognizes the importance of tourism (e.g. to generate foreign exchange).

9. Government restraint has impacted on the Canadian Parks Service's ability to provide services to its visitors. The resulting gaps are being filled by the tourism industry whom we have chosen not to adopt as partners.

10. We do not acknowledge good tourism models, despite a number of recent successes (e.g. Pacific Rim Whale Festival, Mt. Norquay redevelopment, Sunshine summer use program). These are not seen as stepping stones on which a more positive attitude can be fostered.

11. We are not committed to facilitating the development of quality tourism facilities and experiences even after we have approved them.

C. The Western Region Must be Positioned to Respond to the Continuing Growth of the Tourism Industry

Tourism will not go away. It will continue to grow as a significant sector of our western Canada economy. The trends seem to indicate that it will no longer be acceptable to react to initiatives of the tourism sector. If we chose not to lead, we will be led. A summary of a number of key trends and their associated implications are provided below.

1. The continued overall growth of tourism as business sector will place increased pressure for tourism development within and adjacent to park boundaries.

   The Canadian Parks Service must define its objectives and role regarding tourism in order to effectively take advantage of the growth in this sector. National parks and historic sites will become more important to provincial and national economies, and the Canadian Parks Service will have an opportunity to become a leader in managing tourism within the principles of environmental sustainability. Through proactive efforts in regional coordination and tourism partnership development, future damage to the environment can be substantially reduced. In order to take full advantage of tourism partnership opportunities and to manage park development pressures, expertise in effectively dealing with the private sector must be acquired.

2. The profile of tourists is changing. People are taking more frequent and shorter vacations, and the proportions of non-resident visitors are increasing. For example, the number of visitors of Asian origin is growing.

   The implication of shorter trips is that the Canadian Parks Service will need to emphasize regional market strategies. More pre-trip information must be available. Short and complete experience packages must be offered.

   Changes in the ethnic make-up of the park's visitors will require efforts to understand their needs and value systems. Modifications in the kinds of services provided and the way facilities are developed will be necessary.

Coordination with tourism agencies will be necessary to create realistic expectations in foreign visitors.

More foreign visitors provide an opportunity to present an image of Canada and the Canadian Parks Service. Staffing requirements will increasingly need to account for language and value differences.

The significant increase in Asian investment creates both problems and opportunities. Controlling the level of foreign investment in parks will require regulatory devices. For example, lease clauses could be designed that restrict sale if foreign ownership levels in the area are too high. The Canadian Parks Service's corporate philosophy will have to take on added assertiveness in controlling foreign developers who may have a different view regarding the purpose of parks. The motives of this group must be understood and education on the mandate of the Canadian Parks Service may be necessary. On the other hand, foreign investment presents an opportunity develop partnerships with this group in order to provide needed facilities, especially in the face of government cutbacks. The issue of foreign investment will not disappear, the CPS must deal with it.

3. People want experiences.

This trend implies that the various park experiences will have to be defined and packaged. Additionally, the Canadian Parks Service should continue to facilitate park experiences while its tourism partners provide comforts, accommodation and meals. A tremendous opportunity exists in the provision of environmental education experiences, and the development of staff skills in this area must be emphasized.

4. Customer or visitor satisfaction will increase in importance.

We will have to be rigorous in monitoring both our tourism partners and ourselves in the delivery of service excellence, because this will affect our image and our public support.

5. The large size of the baby-boomers segment will create demand emphasizing convenience, service and amenities.

Many baby-boomers are well travelled and as a group are the best educated generation ever. This group will require additional services, thereby creating considerable pressure for divergence in the range of facilities and programs offered by the CPS and tourism industry. As this group matures, they will seek activities which are active but contain a sense of adventure, culture and educational value. Many of our parks are in an excellent position to take advantage of this demand; however the planning and development of

infrastructure will need to be flexible to meet the baby-boomers' changing needs.

D. A New Leadership Role in Tourism is Needed

The tourism industry of Western Canada focuses on our parks as major destinations. The Western Region can no longer afford to maintain a peripheral role in the tourism industry, if we are committed to the responsible management of visitor impacts. Only in cooperation with our tourism partners will we achieve a place of distinction in the business of presenting nationally and internationally significant Canadian heritage to Canadians and our international guests. We have therefore identified a radical new role for the Western Region. Through this role, we have a superb opportunity to present a positive image of Western Canada to Canadians and the world.

Western Region's New Tourism Role

We will be a credible, environmentally responsible leader and partner in the tourism industry of Western Canada. Our parks will provide high quality tourism experiences consistent with protected areas containing heritage resources of national and international significance.

E. Recommendations

Recommendation 5.1

In five years, tourism will be an integral part of the planning, management and delivery system of CPS, Western Region, guided by the Regional Marketing Strategy and Regional Strategic Plan, which:

- ***demonstrates leadership in the tourism industry by managing for environmental sustainability in our national and national historic parks;***
- ***uses a directed and focused marketing approach to the provision of integrated park experiences and opportunities;***
- ***establishes credible and recognized internal expertise in tourism, to the point where the Western Region is sought after as a source of expert opinion on parks and tourism;***
- ***enables the Western Region to become a full partner in the development of regional, provincial and national tourism policies and strategies;***

- *contributes to broader federal initiatives and priorities through our contribution to tourism and resource protection;*
- *rationalizes resource allocations for tourism infrastructure and services on the basis of market potential;*
- *enables the CPS to work effectively with tourism partners in industry and government; and*
- *encourages industry investment opportunity to mutually benefit regional tourism planning objectives.*

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 5.1

The following actions are incomplete, but represent a starting point for achieving the region's new role in tourism. Refer also to the sections on Managing Visitor Impacts and Service Excellence for related actions.

Planning Tools

- Carry out market analyses and research to increase our understanding of visitors, tourism trends and the effectiveness of our service delivery, directed toward regional priorities and decision making. Position each park with respect to key market segments and match appropriate park products and services with the segments.

Partnerships

- Proactively manage park leases to ensure the provision of appropriate park experiences by;
  - developing criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of park leases, based on the desired park experience and the desired position in the marketplace;
  - reviewing all existing leases with respect to their consistency with these criteria;
  - revising and/or renegotiating leases to reflect the desired park experience and high quality services;

- actively monitoring lease compliance and acting on infractions;
- approving new leases based on the established criteria; and
- working with lessees to educate them in environmental sustainability, while at the same time understanding their needs for visitor services/ experiences.

■ Identify and define key park experiences and opportunities that can be marketed with tourism partners to achieve the Western region's mission. Appropriate mechanisms include:

- negotiating joint marketing plans and agreements which will assist in achieving strategic objectives; and
- implementing a program of packaged natural and cultural heritage experiences with selected tour operators.

■ Find innovative ways to work more closely with the tourism industry, such as:

- taking the initiative with our public sector partners to define integrated and complementary roles and tourism strategies which make the best use of the talents, mandates and resources of each;
- developing and implementing a communications strategy relevant to different segments of the tourism industry to encourage mutual understanding, facilitate partnerships and educate our tourism partners in the mission, vision and values of the CPS;
- securing our partners' participation in contributing to federal initiatives;
- holding semi-annual meetings with key tourism industry representatives;
- developing an award for environmentally-responsible tourism operators in each national park;
- participating actively in local, regional, national and international tourism organizations and be on the board of directors of two of the organizations; and

- creating a Parks and Partners tourism advisory council, as a bridge between government and private sector initiatives.

- Manage the national historic parks and sites as a separate product line in order to better market them as tourism attractions, rationalize resource allocations and use, and accelerate new park establishment.

- Serve as the catalyst to create a heritage tourism component in the tourism curriculum of at least two post-secondary educational institutions in Western Canada, aimed at promoting sustainable use.

Management Methods

- Develop innovative strategies on a regional basis which will lead to a net gain in environmental quality and a reduction in the impact on non-renewable resources. For example, implement and act upon an environmental audit which assesses all CPS and park concessionaires and lessees' programs and processes, to ensure their effectiveness.

- Implement a staff recognition program which acknowledges innovation and excellence in tourism partnerships, and significant contributions in the field of tourism and parks.

SECTION 6

BETTER RECREATION PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT CAN SERVE TO ENHANCE USE OF FACILITIES, VISITOR SATISFACTION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF VISITOR IMPACTS

A. Background - National Parks and Outdoor Recreation

The word "recreation" means very different things to different people. If we projected a range of recreational opportunities based upon these divergent definitions it would run the gamut from the traditional (hiking, biking, and boating) to the contemporary (punting, spelunking and para-skating). The demand and the marketplace response to the demand for outdoor recreation will continue to grow.

The Canadian Parks Service faces an important challenge in responding to the changing nature and increased profile of recreation. A number of issues are developing at the interface between parks and people in the area of recreation. There is pressure from the public and from the recreation/leisure industry to provide the scenic backdrop for a variety of activities. There is pressure from environmental advocacy groups to exclude all activities which are not clearly linked to the national parks mandate. In addition, as our Policy indicates, national parks and national historic sites cannot be "all things to all people".

Decisions must be made regarding our role in meeting recreational needs and choices must be made to establish which recreational activities are appropriate and which are not. We know this issue inside and out - or do we? Does the agency fully understand "use" within the recreational context? Our Task Force group concluded that we do not; at least not fully. For example, experts in the field of leisure and recreation were predicting the popularity and impacts of mountain bicycling for many years, yet an informed approach to managing this activity remains absent in our region.

It is no longer enough to know how many people are using a trail or taking part in a new activity. We need to establish which of these activities serve to enhance a low-impact, high-experience park visit and in which of these activities is the park experience almost superfluous. We need to establish what a "park recreational experience" really means and communicate the resulting policy positions and roles both within the agency and beyond.

B. In 1990, We Have Fallen Behind in the Outdoor Recreation Field

Our current initiatives and issues in the area of outdoor recreation are summarized in the following section. We found as a result of our analysis that the Western Region is dealing

with recreation in a reactive manner. The Western Region is no longer the leader in the outdoor recreation field - a position that we held in the 1960s and early 1970s.

1. The Canadian Parks Service provides opportunities for activities which are dependent on natural outdoor settings, emphasizing minimum facilities and infrastructure. We provide access to park resources and assistance in understanding them. We provide the facility infrastructure for recreation activities (e.g. trails, parking lots, campgrounds, shelters, information centres, swimming pools, marinas).

2. The Canadian Parks Service has a mandate to provide opportunities which are:

   - consistent with protection objectives and zoning;
   - economically within reach of the average visitor;
   - accommodate a broad range of visitors; and
   - do not compromise other visitor uses.

3. We manage activities through a list of 35 appropriate activities, without defining what constitutes an appropriate park experience. We manage or control activities, facilities and services, rather than facilitating park experiences.

4. We do not fully understand visitor needs, recreation trends, expected benefits or values, nor do we measure satisfaction or the impacts of recreational activities.

5. We have insufficient standards of satisfaction to manage toward or to monitor against.

6. There are still a great number of untapped recreational opportunities in many parks. In addition, park use could be more evenly distributed. We have chosen, in many cases, to accept traditional patterns of use.

7. We have not differentiated our role in the recreation market (e.g. what is the difference between recreational opportunities provided in Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country?).

8. We have failed to clearly articulate the long term economic and recreational values of wilderness. This has often resulted in value conflicts with provincial governments and others.

9. We do not know how to deal with new activities, because we have never explicitly defined what is appropriate in a park and are therefore constantly being challenged (e.g. excessive energy has been devoted to examining low

participant activities such as hang gliding and caving to the detriment of other appropriate park activities).

10. The Canadian Parks Service lacks control over service offerings by third parties and the recreation industry (e.g. certification for guides and outfitters, lease management).

11. We are constrained by tradition in dealing effectively with certain activities (e.g. financial allocations for horse trails).

12. The Canadian Parks Service's operational policies often yield mixed messages to the public (e.g different backcountry registration policies among the Four Mountain Parks).

C. The Demand for Outdoor Recreation Will Continue to Grow and Evolve

We have looked at the major trends for outdoor recreation which will affect us in the Western Region. A review of the trends summarized below indicates that we must change in our approach if we wish to remain relevant in the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities.

1. Recreational demand is expected to continue to grow to the year 2000 and beyond.

   There are of course many implications to this trend. We will need to be far more focused in our delivery of services and programs. Proactive monitoring of recreational demands will be necessary in order to predict future uses that should either be targeted or excluded. The Canadian Parks Service will need to position itself with respect to other recreational providers in the area. Tourism partner selection should include consideration of their ability to provide recreational opportunities. Increased pressure on national park resources will occur, and they could be seen primarily as recreational playgrounds, unless we become more proactive in our management approaches.

2. People want experiences not just lots of facilities.

   The Canadian Parks Service must take a more holistic approach to the vacation experience by working with partners to provide packages that meet the needs of visitors.

3. The median age of our visitor will increase by the year 2000 to 41 years of age. We will have both an older and a more experienced clientele.

The implications of this are that front country use will increase, more amenities will be demanded, and there will be more of a shift toward group tours. Shoulder season use, RV use, and the demand for quality cultural and educational experiences will also increase.

4. More competition in the recreation industry will result in a multitude of intervening opportunities elsewhere.

   With increased competition the Canadian Parks Service will have to better position itself with respect to its inherent advantages (national park setting), and target specific market segments with specific services.

5. There will be relatively significant increases in the prices for services throughout the outdoor recreation field.

   Participants in recreational activities will increasingly be expected to pay for facilities and services. Our revenue management and prices, therefore, must be more market-oriented. Within this requirement, the CPS must ensure that services are within the reach of all Canadians.

D. A More Dynamic Role in Outdoor Recreation is Needed

We face new and challenging requirements as facilitators of recreational experiences. The Western Region cannot remain contemporary and relevant in the outdoor recreation field by merely managing facilities. We have, therefore, recommended a new orientation for our role in outdoor recreation which is consistent with the international reputation of our parks, and is based on the integrity of our settings and our large infrastructure and asset base.

Proposed Future Role for Outdoor Recreation

We will be leaders in providing and managing a specific range of high-quality outdoor recreational experiences consistent with protected areas containing heritage resources of national and international significance. We will be recognized experts in planning, assessing and managing visitor impacts.

E. Recommendations

Recommendation - 6.1

In five years, the CPS, Western Region will have integrated its planning and management of outdoor recreational opportunities, in a manner which:

- ***Clearly defines the desired experience and benefits to be derived from each park and will position these in a regional context;***
- ***establishes clear criteria for assessing appropriate levels and types of recreational activities within individual parks and across the region;***
- ***optimizes the use of park recreational facilities and maintains a high standard of facility management;***
- ***increases our understanding of park visitors, recreation trends and opportunities;***
- ***enables us to encourage recreation partnerships and work creatively and effectively with partners to provide the best possible park experience; and***
- ***rationalizes the allocation of resources.***

Actions Needed to Achieve Recommendation 6.1

A number of actions are identified below which we consider to be critical if the Western Region is to play an important part in providing appropriate outdoor recreation opportunities and managing visitor impacts.

Management Processes

- Develop a regional recreation strategy, which:
  - Defines appropriate experiences and benefits to be derived from each park;
  - identifies and profiles current and potential recreation partners;
  - positions each park so that the system of Western Region parks provides the optimal range of desired experiences and maximizes the potential of protected natural and cultural features;

- assesses the desired experiences and benefits to be derived from each park against what is currently being offered;
- re-aligns park programs to meet the regional position of each park;
- identifies alternatives to discontinued activities in the surrounding region; and
- includes an effective communications program for the public, park staff, concessionaires and lessees.

- Undertake periodic future scoping exercises to better anticipate future impact of recreational trends and economic factors on park use.
- Develop a credible and directed social science (recreation and tourism) research capability that is recognized by academics, our recreation partners and the recreation industry, and solves management issues.
- Improve facility use monitoring by establishing better management information systems and define an effective methodology for using and improving our existing sources of information (e.G. Pre-trip enquiries, trail data, front-line staff, comment forms).

Partnerships

- Negotiate and develop partnership agreements with all major recreation partners, aimed at a coordinating regional planning and delivery of recreation opportunities and experiences.
- Develop credible internal expertise which allows us to understand, influence and work effectively with recreational partners to the point where the cps is sought after as a source of expert opinion.
- Develop linkages, including exchange programs, with recreation partners in the public and private sector to improve communications, mutual understanding and exchange of information.

SECTION 7

A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

In order to achieve the objectives of the Western Region's Strategic Plan, as well as the recommendations of this Task Force, we will require a highly effective organization. In this section of our report we present the specific changes for organizational effectiveness that need to be implemented to meet the challenges of the next ten years.

There are five key factors that influence organizational effectiveness. High performance organizations carefully address all of these factors. The factors we examined are described below:

- **People** - the skills, training and mix of people required to effectively implement a chosen strategy.

- **Management Processes** - the management processes needed to ensure that the organization is properly directed and managed. These processes include planning processes such as strategic planning, park management planning, financial planning and capital planning. Monitoring procedures for items such as visitor satisfaction, financial reporting, activity reporting, environmental monitoring and maintenance management are also included.

- **Organizational Structure** - here we examined organizational overlaps, the degree of functional specialization and integration that currently exists, reporting relationships, role statements, and the need for change in each of these areas.

- **Recognizing Achievement** - we examined the reward systems necessary to motivate staff to achieve desired goals. Most of the focus was on employee recognition and elements of human resource planning, as we recognized that the Department's ability to change salary structure or provide bonuses was limited by Public Service Commission guidelines.

- **Organizational Culture** - organization culture is formed by the beliefs, value systems, myths, and tradition of the organization. The resulting culture, if not oriented to the strategic objectives of the organization, can serve as a major barrier to achieving the organization's objectives. On the other hand, once such beliefs are aligned to the organizations strategy, they can provide a powerful, unifying and motivating influence.

A. New Skills are Required For Our Employees

Current Issues and Requirements for Change

The Task Force recognizes that the dedication and expertise of CPS employees is one of the organization's greatest strengths and the key to the continued success of its program. In order to effectively meet the challenges of the Task Force recommendations on managing visitor impacts, service excellence, environmental stewardship, tourism and recreation, a number of changes must be made to build on this strength. At the same time, care must be taken not to break down the positive sense of tradition and high level of staff commitment which the CPS must treat as valuable resource.

The Strategic Plan and Task Force recommendations point to several dramatic changes in focus for the organization. These have important implications for the skills required by CPS employees to carry us into the future. For example, dynamic outreach and environmental advocacy programs are envisioned to strengthen the current Interpretation function. The report also recommends the integration of service excellence, recreation and tourism management, working with partnerships, and proactive visitor management into all aspects of CPS planning and operations.

Bringing about the recommended changes will require dynamic, visionary and outward-looking leadership in a number of areas, along with more specialized and sharply honed skills/areas of expertise. The region will require a number of "agents of change" who share a common vision for the future, strongly support the strategic objectives and who can effectively lead the organization through the trials of change.

New skills and areas of expertise required to achieve the Task Force recommendations are discussed below.

a) Tourism

Despite being one of the key tourism attractions in Western Canada, we have few people who understand tourism and its relationship to the Canada Parks Service mandate, or who can effectively deal with the tourism industry. There is a need for tourism expertise to deal with region-wide and park-specific tourism planning, partnerships and management.

b) Partnerships/ Business Relations

We need to be more outward looking. We currently lack the organizational ability necessary to build and negotiate mutually beneficial partnerships with the public and private sector. We need people who are willing to deal with partners, who are outward looking, have a business orientation, and are entrepreneurial. Such people will not be easy to recruit or to develop. Simply adding this responsibility on to an existing job description will not work. We need individuals with proper training, experience, contacts and qualifications. Such individuals do not exist in the organization at the present time.

c) Service Excellence

We currently have managers and staff who do not believe that providing a high quality service to visitors or others is an important part of their job. There is a need for all individuals in the organization to recognize that the CPS is a service organization. Attitudes towards visitors must change so that managers and staff realize that visitors are guests. Changes to hiring criteria and a major commitment to hospitality training are required to effect this change.

Credible expertise in service excellence is also required to effectively develop standards and delivery programs, to educate and inculcate service excellence values into the organization and develop monitoring programs. The delivery of service excellence is a prerequisite for building continuing support and fostering environmental stewardship.

d) Recreation

A modest level of expertise in recreation management has accumulated within the CPS on an ad hoc basis. Expertise on outdoor recreation is scattered throughout various sub-activities at both the park and regional office levels. As a result, we are not in a proactive position to respond to demands for new recreational activities or plan for integrated park experiences. We require recreation specialists who are treated as valued professionals in our organization. Front line staff also need to be more knowledgeable about park recreational experiences.

e) Environmental Education and Advocacy

In order to achieve the proposed goals, we need to recruit high profile, dynamic and visionary individuals to lead the environmental education and

advocacy functions. Within WRO, there is a need for more environmental education program planning skills. Our environmental education specialists must be plugged into outside educational opportunities and should be seen by outside educational institutions as leaders in their professions.

It is also critical that leaders of the advocacy program be active participants in environmental advocacy outside the CPS so that a unified context for broader environmental messages is provided. There is a need for expertise to take advantage of media opportunities and curricula development.

f) **Managing Visitor Impacts**

Our employees already have considerable expertise in terms of many of the techniques for managing visitor impacts. They often fail, however, to connect service excellence or the establishment of partnerships with the tourism sector as an essential prerequisite for managing visitor impacts. There is a need for a increased skills and knowledge in managing visitor impacts, in order to remain current with the latest techniques and to train our employees.

Barriers to Improving Staff Knowledge and Expertise

The Task Force also identified several barriers to improving staff knowledge and expertise. The most prominent of these are discussed below along with some suggested solutions.

1. There are a lack of opportunities for cross-functional mobility and training. This has lead to insularity and entrenchment of positions, narrow perspectives, a lack of broad experience among managers who come up through the ranks, and loss of opportunities to learn from the varied ideas and experiences of others. Although we recognize the problems to be overcome, we strongly recommend that careful consideration be given to the U.S. National Park Service's "Park Officer Model".

2. Many WRO staff lack field experience in **managing** programs and therefore have difficulty developing plans or regional programs which meet park needs or can be effectively implemented. The U.S. Parks Service, for example, has recognized this short-coming and requires all regional office staff to have prior program management experience at the field level. This would have great benefit providing that we do not develop dogmatic policy to preclude moving talented employees into key positions.

3. Our existing and new employees do not receive an orientation to the organization, its mission, vision and values. As a result, individual values

and perceptions are often at odds with those of the organization, and there are lost opportunities to establish a sense of belonging to a unified organization. This is perpetuated by functional training, which inculcates the values of different functions (e.g. Interpretation, Visitor Services, Warden Service) into new employees. Once established, these values are very difficult to change. The U.S. Parks Service requires all staff to undergo an intensive week-long orientation (some might say indoctrination) course before they begin their first job with the organization.

4. The current emphasis on seasonal and short term positions in the parks inhibits the our ability to attract full-time specialists and denies employees the ability to work on longer-term projects, gain a sense of belonging to the organization or gain the necessary experience to move into more responsible positions.

5. The proportion of financial resources allocated to training is totally inadequate if employees are to achieve and maintain a credible level of expertise in the new or modified roles that we have identified. We thnik that the region must embrace the "guiding principles and concepts" identified in the Public Service 2000 report on Training and Development.

Recommendations - Skill Development

In order to have the right people and skills to meet future challenges, the Parks and People Task Force recommends that the Western Region implement the following:

Recommendation - 7.1

Hire/train regional specialists with leadership qualities, communication skills and expertise in:

- ***tourism planning, partnerships and management;***
- ***media relations and environmental advocacy;***
- ***business relations and agreement negotiation;***
- ***service excellence and quality assurance;***
- ***outdoor recreation planning and management;***
- ***heritage education, curriculum and program planning; and***
- ***managing visitor impacts.***

Parallel, full-time specialists may be required in some parks.

Recommendation - 7.2

Develop and apply selection criteria aimed at searching out a commitment to service excellence and environmental stewardship when hiring at all levels in the organization. All managers and staff should be expected to be advocates for the CPS mission, vision and values.

Recommendation - 7.3

Implement a comprehensive orientation and hospitality training program for all staff and managers, which:

- *communicates the CPS mission, vision and values;*
- *is geared to the Region's needs;*
- *discusses contemporary issues and management strategies;*
- *is mandatory; and*
- *builds on other public and private sector programs such as "Alberta Best" and the U.S. National Parks Service training program.*

Recommendation - 7.4

Require or provide program management experience at the field level as a selection criterion for all WRO planning and functional specialist positions. We submit that it is not possible to provide functional advice to park staff if you have never worked in a park. Even a three to six month assignment to a park would be beneficial.

Recommendation - 7.5

Investigate options for facilitating cross-functional mobility and training, including:

- *a mentoring program;*
- *the "Park Officer" model used by the U.S. National Park Service so that our manager's options to allocate human resources are no unduly constrained by experience in specific sub-activities;*
- *increasing rotation of duties (e.g. one individual could work in an information centre, present interpretive programs, assist with research studies and carry out backcountry patrols).*

Recommendation - 7.6

Develop exchange programs for CPS staff and managers with relevant industry and public sector organizations.

Recommendation - 7.7

Expect staff to participate in scientific/industry conferences, recognize this participation as a significant achievement and learning opportunity, and ensure they report their findings to their colleagues.

Recommendation - 7.8

Support the use of technology to assist with repetitious tasks such as some aspects of providing visitor information, collecting fees and registering campers.

Recommendation - 7.9

Substantially increase the allocation of training funds to ensure that strategic priorities can be achieved.

B. We Need to Streamline, Integrate and Improve Our Management Processes

Our planning processes are intended to assist us in making informed and intelligent decisions about our program delivery. Too often, we have chosen to adopt processes which are excessively date-intensive, time-consuming to apply, functionally controlled cumbersome, inward looking and difficult to nationalize in a dynamic external world Not withstanding these rather negative considerations, we continue to apply processes and then have little confidence in the resulting decisions. Recommendations for change are identified below. There are undoubtedly others, but we feel these eight are critical if we are to successfully achieve our Strategic Plan objectives and Task Force recommendations.

Recommendations - Streamlining and Improving Management

Recommendation - 7.10

Our Plans Need to Contain or be Based on Sound Strategic Direction.

Much debate has occurred about the appropriate levels of detail for park management plans, service plans and so forth. We believe that our management plans tend to be too specific. Park management plans need to become a park's strategic plan. Land use zoning should play a far more important role in park management planning. If this is to occur, we

need to consider refining our five-part system to ensure it become a more effective tool for planning and management. We think that adoption of elements of the Recreational Opportunity Concept will help.

As a region we need to consider the requirements to engage in comprehensive planning and priority setting based on regional strategic objectives. Application of our processes is too often dictated by unstated or poorly enunciated priorities. Our new regional Strategic Plan is a sound basis to begin the difficult task of becoming more strategic and future-oriented, and less reactive and issue-driven. Being more strategic in our planning leads us to our second recommendation.

Recommendation - 7.11

Plans Need to Set Direction but to Leave Latitude for Managers to Manage

If it is accepted that park management plans set much needed strategic direction, then service plans, resource management plans need to be park-driven processes that allow park managers the latitude to manage the program elements for which they are accountable. We have much to do in this area. We must maximize the effectiveness of our planning processes by ensuring that the resulting products serve the specific needs of park managers. This must take precedence over the requirements of functional specialists in Program Headquarters.

Recommendation - 7.12

Our Planning Processes Need to be Better Integrated.

We believe that integration of our processes can occur under the rubric of managing visitor impacts. We should seriously question any process which serves only one sub-activity or functional unit. Our new roles for tourism, environmental stewardship and outdoor recreation, as well as the promotion of effective partnerships requires a real commitment to credible plans which are integrated at all levels. Integrated planning will assist us to take into account cumulative environmental and social impacts.

The current approach of various sub-activities taking park management plans and developing functionally - driven plans appears to be of questionable value. We believe that a single integrated implementation/operational plan needs to be developed for each park, or park area, on the basis of the park management plan.

Recommendation - 7.13

Our Planning Processes Need Streamlining.

Our processes are excessively data-intensive, cumbersome and tedious. Data-intensive investigations provide us with the security that no stone has been unturned, but are unacceptably time-consuming, costly and issue-driven. We have got to get the job done faster, if our plans are to be a contemporary reflection of the dynamic environment that we are functioning in. Streamlining will require a greater focus on the end result. This is particularly crucial if we are to capitalize on the tremendous opportunities available to us to foster effective partnerships. Few private sector partners,for example, could wait nine years for the Revelstoke/Glacier management plan to be approved.

Recommendation - 7.14

Our Processes Need to be Outward Looking.

The Canadian Parks Service has developed processes which are inward looking. We need rejuvenated processes that have an outward focus. This is essential if we are to deal with regional threats and opportunities to our parks. We must place far greater priority on regional integration in our planning. An outward focus is also a prerequisite to involving public and private sector partners in tourism, outdoor recreation, heritage education, service excellence, and visitor impact management.

Recommendation - 7.15

Our plans must establish desired and allowable conditions for use and development.

We have addressed this consideration in our discussion on Limits of Acceptable Change (see: Section 1). Without the establishment of environmental and experiential conditions to be managed for, we will continue to be constrained by an inability to establish limits to the amounts and types of acceptable use.

Recommendation - 7.16

Our Planning Processes Must Result in Decisive Decision-making.

We prepare plans at great cost, and then lack confidence in the planning decisions that are made. As a result, we often revisit the decisions. There is a need for the decision-making processes to be streamlined and decisive - otherwise the Western Region will continue to allocate its limited financial and human resources ineffectually, and we will lose credibility in our partnership dealings.

Recommendation - 7.17

Service and Product-Line Quality Standards Need to be an Integral Part of our Planning Processes.

Presently there are no regional processes which provide service and quality standards, nor any for monitoring the delivery of service excellence. Where maintenance standards have been developed, these do not adequately reflect visitor's service expectations and differ significantly from park to park.

There is no service planning by service or product line for region wide improvements such as reservation systems. As a result, all service and visitor planning is reactive and parks look at long term system-wide improvement and common processes (e.g. common registration processes for back country use). No region wide service standard guidelines have been developed.

The capital budgeting program does not recognize regional priorities based on service quality requirements and processes for evaluating capital projects do not include intangibles such as service excellence.

C. Our Organizational Structure Needs to Change to Meet Future Challenges

Background

The current CPS organizational structure is functional, hierarchical and too rigid to meet future challenges. Over the last decade there have been significant changes in the size and complexity of internal and external issues affecting the CPS organization. The addition of new parks, increases in visitation due to recreational and tourism activities, as well as broader social and demographic changes in Western Canada are but a few of the external factors that have impacted on the organization. Internal factors include split accountability for functional responsibilities and bottlenecks in planning and plan implementation. Internal and external factors have combined to produce an organization which has difficulty in assessing priorities, is slow and reactive to visitor needs and trends, and is becoming increasing insular.

As park use changes in response to changing demographic profiles, broad social trends and evolving expectations for tourism and recreation services, the CPS will be challenged from an increasingly complex external environment. This will demand an organizational structure which is flatter, innovative, responsive to visitor needs and focused on the maintenance of heritage resource integrity and the delivery of service excellence..

Charting the Course and our **Strategic Plan** have set the vision and direction for the future of the CPS Western Region. The main focus of this section of the Parks and People Task Force report is to examine managerial and staff responsibilities and how these might be best organized functionally to achieve the recommendations of the Task Force. Rather than proposing a definitive organizational chart the recommendations indicate broad functional groupings, along with roles and activities to be carried out at the park and regional office level.

Criteria for Organizational Effectiveness

Criteria for an effective regional organization which can confidently meet the challenges of the year 2000 were developed and a number of optional functional groupings were assessed against these criteria. The Task Force recommendations which we suggest represent the functional groups which best met the following criteria for organizational effectiveness.

Our **organizational structure** in the Western Region must:

1. Provide strong leadership to define strategic priorities at the regional and field levels;
2. provide a basis for the integrated management of visitor impacts;
3. enhance our skills in tourism, environmental education, outdoor recreation, and service excellence;
4. strengthen the outward focus of the organization;
5. be flexible and adaptable to change;
6. emphasize the delivery of park programs through partnerships;
7. broaden and change the role of heritage education so that our messages reach a broad audience and can be integrated with other educational programs;
8. integrate and streamline our various planning programs;
9. integrate many aspects of human resource planning, such as volunteers, recruiting and employee recognition programs;
10. eliminate split accountabilities; and

11. assist in permitting more cross-functional training, job opportunities, exchanges and work integration.

A complete and detailed analysis of organizational structure was beyond the mandate of the Task Force. As a result, the recommendations do not address all the factors inherent in organizational structure such as reporting relationships, span of control and responsibility analysis. Further responsibility and organizational analyses will need to be done.

Additional analysis will also be required to indicate which parks will need their own expertise, and which should be shared among several parks or between parks and the regional office. Regional and park roles will also need further clarification. It should be noted that the identification of functional groups does not preclude strong linkages among different groups (e.g. between Community Affairs and Business Relations, or between Planning/Socio-Economic Research and Service Management). In fact, these linkages are essential to an effective organization.

Recommended functional groups, and their roles and responsibilities are described below, along with a discussion of the issues and requirements for change which led to the recommendations.

Recommendations- Organizational Effectiveness

1. Community Affairs/Environmental Education/Advocacy

The Parks and People Task Force report frequently points to the need for a more outward looking focus for the CPS, in order for the organization to remain relevant into the next century. The Community Affairs/Environmental Education/Advocacy functional group can be a leader in this initiative.

At the present time, communication to the public is fragmented among a number of different departments, which impedes the development and presentation of a coordinated program and corporate image. The result has been a diverse assortment of initiatives (some of which have worked in direct opposition to others), duplication and inefficiency, and a confused public image. The current Community Affairs directorate has been a step in the right direction, but its scope must be broadened to include;

- all public communications activities to promote coordinated initiatives,
- provision of a consistent public image,
- better ties with the environmental community, and
- stronger leadership in regional integration.

The communications planning function at a regional level needs to determine the appropriate mix of park themes, environmental and corporate messages so that all communications is coordinated and externally consistent.

The existing Interpretation function is not currently positioned to implement the applicable recommendations of this Task Force. The role of Interpretation must be broadened to include environmental education, environmental advocacy. Environmental education must be seen as an integral part of the visitor's total park experience. Outreach programs must tap into the mainstream of the educational system to specific urban audiences, particularly youth, new Canadians, and those not predisposed to supporting national parks. We can no longer afford to provide highly personalized educational experiences to small groups on a face-to-face basis in each park.

An additional challenge will be to facilitate, motivate and trust others to deliver national parks and broad environmental education and advocacy messages. To be cost effective, methods must be found to leverage Parks educational messages to a broader audience. It will be essential to work and develop partnerships with educational institutions, environmental groups and others in order to assist them in the development of environmental education and advocacy programs which are consistent with CPS objectives.

The regional Community Affairs/Environmental Education/Advocacy function must also provide leadership, training and direction to the parks so they can effectively carry out their responsibilities for managing interest groups, dealing with the media, developing education partnerships and presenting in-park education.

Recommendation - 7.18

The Task Force recommends that the Community Affairs function be expanded substantially to include all outreach and public affairs activities, including environmental education and advocacy.

This must include a dramatic change in the traditional role of Interpretation. Environmental education must reach beyond park boundaries into urban areas and build partnerships which encourage others to assist us in communicating our environmental messages. The entire function must be directed and managed within a regional communications framework.

Roles:

To coordinate, direct and manage all external and internal communication for the purposes of educating, informing and influencing targeted publics.

To solicit and monitor public opinion on CPS policies and plans.

Activities would include:

Educational services (e.g. edukits, school programming, in-park educational programs, liaison with provincial departments of education); public relations; media relations; VIP visits; public consultation; pre-trip planning services; advocacy programs; publications; advertising; creative services/media development; ceremonies; internal communications; and regional communications planning and evaluation.

WRO would have the primary responsibility for:

Developing regional plans and strategies for these activities; identifying and presenting CPS and DOE corporate messages; liaison with provincial education departments, environmental groups and other related advocacy groups; creative services; guidelines for media relations; outreach to urban audiences; developing the framework for working with others on outreach programs; a regional publications and advertising strategy; and public consultation.

Each park would be responsible for:

Park-specific presentation of park themes within the regional plan; local media relations, advocacy, public relations; and local area outreach programs, education programs and joint publications.

2. Service Management

We believe that substantial changes need be made to the current organizational structure. Some of the issues and requirements for change that we identified are summarized below.

a) The current organization does not optimize the use of financial or human resources, particularly between Engineering/Works and Visitor Services. Both these functions exist to provide and maintain services.

b) Maintenance of assets is often done independently of visitor needs or effective facility operations.

c) New facilities can be planned and constructed without adequate consideration of visitor needs.

d) We do not properly monitor the level of visitor satisfaction associated with our facilities.

e) In some areas managers without facility management skill are responsible for operating substantial facilities (e.g. Chief Park Interpreter responsible for managing the Cave and Basin Centre and Pool).

f) Many facilities, such as trails, fall between the cracks, they are managed by different sub-activities in different parks.

g) Recapitalization of facilities does not adequately consider the visitor perspective and tends to emphasize cost benefit analysis, life cycle costing and engineering considerations.

The Task Force members believes that a functional group organized along product/service lines, rather than the traditional sub-activity divisions, and whose primary concern is service excellence and visitor satisfaction, would be far more effective at achieving the strategic plan objectives. Regional office must play a key leadership role in defining and auditing service standards.
Closer examination of the concept of treating historic parks and sites as product lines is warranted, so that they receive the attention they deserve. The traditional Interpretation function has not been included in the proposed Service Management functional group due to its expanded role and the requirement for highly specialized expertise. We believe it would be inadvisable to dilute the focus of heritage education activities by incorporating them into the Service Management functional group.

Recommendation - 7.19

It is recommended that a new Service Management function be established to ensure that service excellence and effectiveness is achieved in all aspects of park facilities, service and programs.

Auditing and monitoring service quality and visitor satisfaction based on service standards is the recommended strategy for achieving and maintaining service excellence. This group should be structured along service/product lines (e.g. campgrounds, trails, parkways, some historic parks and sites, etc).

Role:

To ensure that park and private sector services, facilities and programs for visitors are delivered in a coordinated manner, in order to maintain high standards for: facility operations and maintenance; public safety; integrated visitor experiences; and visitor satisfaction.

Activities would include:

Facility operations and maintenance; defining and monitoring service quality objectives and standards; tourism and recreation activity operations; in-park visitor information; identifying levels of rescue response and law enforcement associated with visitor facilities; concession and leasehold service quality monitoring; hospitality; asset management; energy conservation programs; fleet management and revenue management.

WRO responsibilities would include:

Defining facilities, service, maintenance, safety, and law enforcement standards across the region for public and private sector product/service line management (e.g. trails, roofed accommodation, campgrounds, parkways, backcountry camps, touring industry), establishing regional policy and directives to achieve planned objectives; integrating visitor expectations and long-term environmental quality into capital programs; setting recapitalization priorities and region-wide product/service line improvements; region-wide service audits; setting revenue targets and goals, and options for achieving them.

Each park would have primary responsibility for:

Day-to-day facility management, maintenance and operations; integrated service delivery and visitor satisfaction according to regional standards; information on in-park opportunities; delivery of packaged opportunities with the private sector; monitoring quality and costs of park and private sector facilities, services and programs; changing service delivery to meet short-term changes in visitor needs; optimizing facility use; and revenue management according to regional direction.

3. Planning/ Socio-Economic Research

Existing planning processes are slow to react to a changing environment, time consuming, and could be better integrated. Having all planning functions in one group would facilitate on-going efforts to streamline and integrate processes, and would enable planning to flow smoothly from the conceptual strategic level to the service delivery level. It would also encourage the transfer of planning knowledge and expertise throughout the organization.

Operational and management planning must be more closely linked functionally, in order to ensure a smoother transition between planning and implementation. Integrating all planning functions would also help to address the concern of service and resource management plans which benefit only one subactivity at present, and which do not necessarily build on the direction provided in park management plans.

Market planning and assessment must take on greater emphasis at all levels of planning, in order to better focus our limited resources on priority areas. Marketing is also required to better manage tourism and recreation initiatives, match park products and services to current and potential markets, monitor trends and assess the impact of changing markets on the CPS.

Socio-economic research activities are currently fragmented between Special Projects, Marketing and A&E's Traffic and Parking Survey group. Research has not been coordinated to match park planning programs, marketing issues or strategic planning initiatives, nor has it been used to address service quality and visitor satisfaction objectives. There is an urgent need to integrate all socio-economic research functions, and to improve linkages between planning, marketing and socio-economic research so work in tandem toward common objectives.

Recommendation - 7.20

The Task Force recommends that all planning (including natural and cultural heritage), and socio-economic research functions (including marketing) integrated into one functional group. This is essential to improve the streamlining and integration of the various planning processes and products.

Role

To establish long-term direction (objectives, strategies and priorities) for the effective management of park resources, visitor impacts, services, programs and facilities.

To research and monitor internal and external factors which will affect the region's management strategies, and serve as sources of expertise in recreation, tourism and visitor impact management.

Activities would include:

Research and monitoring to anticipate changes in the external and internal environment; strategic planning; park management planning; business planning; service planning; market assessments and planning; natural and cultural resource management planning; socio-economic research; socio-economic impact assessments; coordinating strategies for managing visitor impacts; and liaison with relevant outside researchers.

WRO responsibilities would include:

Strategic planning, business planning, park management planning; market assessments, feasibility studies and planning; coordinating and directing service planning; coordinating and directing natural and cultural resource management planning; priorizing and coordinating and carrying out socio-economic research; directing, coordinating and monitoring socio-economic impact assessments activities; establishing contacts with other researchers and keeping up with current research initiatives by others.

Park responsibilities would include:

Input into park management plans; plan implementation; collecting visitor information in support of market assessments and planning; implementing the regional marketing strategy; developing and implementing service plans; developing and implementing resource management plans; identifying needs and park priorities for socio-economic assessments and research.

4. Business Relations

Establishing partnerships is a key objective of the strategic plan. These partnerships are essential not only to provide us with additional resources, but also to better harness our resources with others. Establishing partnerships is an activity which will require specific resourcing, the right kind of people and a clear role if it is to be successful. We must also be far more effective in the management and monitoring of private sector operators in our parks if they are to work along with us in achieving our mission.

Park managers are currently expected to develop and manage partnerships, but most lack the authority, training or contacts to deal effectively with public or private sector partners. In addition, there are no individuals identified as the CPS' business or public sector contacts, which results in a great deal of confusion, mixed messages and a lack of coordination. One group must be identified as the key contact for negotiations and business relations, and that group must have the business and marketing skills, credibility and authority to secure win/win agreements.

If the objectives of the strategic plan are to be achieved additional emphasis on tourism industry relations, and relationships with recreational organizations and educational institutions will be required.

The area of corporate sponsorship and corporate donations has not been addressed at all in the Western Region. Donations and sponsorships have significant potential for providing substantial funding to CPS initiatives. At the Headquarters level, this responsibility is shared between Marketing's Commercial Relations section and Visitor Activities'

Co-operative Activities sections. A coordinated initiative at the regional level is required.

Recommendation - 7.21

It is recommended that a new Business Relations function be established in order to effectively direct, coordinate, manage and establish partnerships with the private and public sectors.

Role:

To encourage, coordinate and direct all business relationships for the purposes of: actively seeking and assessing partnership opportunities; attracting financial and other resources; facilitating mutual cooperation and understanding among the CPS, the business community and public sector partners; harnessing CPS resources with those of the private and public sector; and effectively managing private sector activities in parks.

Activities would include:

Seeking opportunities for cooperative activities, joint ventures, partnerships and corporate sponsorships; negotiating and managing business licences, concessions, licences of occupation and leasehold agreements; establishing agreements with other Federal Government departments; negotiating and managing licensing and marketing agreements with third parties; community planning; facilitating the development and growth of the Canadian Parks Partnership; and maintaining a presence in the business community (e.g. member of Chambers of Commerce).

WRO responsibilities include:

Setting guidelines for the establishment and management of cooperative activities, joint ventures, etc; developing an on-going inventory and seeking out potential major opportunities for joint ventures, sponsorships, etc.; establishing and managing region-wide cooperative activities, joint ventures, etc; providing direction for negotiating and managing concessions, business licences, leases and licences of occupation; negotiating or assisting in negotiating agreements, draft agreements; establishing agreements with other government agencies; negotiating and managing regional licensing and marketing agreements with third parties; facilitating the development and growth of the Canadian Parks Partnership; providing a regional presence in provincial, national, and international business community (e.g. Pacific Asia Travel Association).

Each park would be responsible for:

Seeking, establishing and managing park-specific cooperative activities, joint ventures, etc.; negotiating and manage appropriate business licences, concession agreements, leases and licences of occupation as defined through planning; enforcing punitive measures for non-compliance with agreements; negotiating and managing park licensing and marketing agreements with third parties; maintaining a presence in the park/local area business community (e.g. membership in Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, etc.).

5. Human Resource Management

At the present time the Human Resource Management function is normally buried under Finance and Administration at the park level. At the Regional Office it exists as a separate directorate but its scope does not include employee recognition, providing leadership on staff excellence programs, or managing a potentially significant human resource - volunteers. The Task Force believes that human resource management should be given a higher profile and the areas noted above should be an integral part of this function.

The probable continuation of budgetary restraint and the trend toward individuals looking outside the workplace for life enriching opportunities will make volunteering and the use of volunteers more common. We should take advantage of this trend.

At the present time, the responsibilities of volunteer management have not been clearly defined within the Western Region. The few guidelines that exist are primarily administrative in nature, and volunteer management lacks credibility and has a low profile. There are also psychological barriers to be overcome within the organization. Volunteers have traditionally been viewed as sources of cheap labour, rather than as opportunities to provide meaningful educational and work experiences, as well as an ideal means of leveraging park resources. We must also be careful to ensure that volunteers enhance, rather than replace, on-going employee duties.

The current practice of allocating volunteer management responsibilities to Interpretation or Visitor Services staff who do not have the time or the experience to carry it out properly will never make volunteers an important part of our organization. Volunteer management must be viewed as a human resource function and managed accordingly.

A number of other human resource needs, which should be met by the Human Resources function in order to achieve the recommendations of the Task Force, are discussed in sections describing "People Skills" (See Page 49) and "Recognition of Achievement" (See Page 71). In summary, these sections discuss the need for: more full time employment opportunities; the recruitment of specialists in a number of areas; improved organizational planning and job enrichment opportunities through exchange programs, cross-departmental career path opportunities, and training programs in such areas as tourism, hospitality

training, and service excellence; and increased recognition of significant initiatives and achievement.

Recommendation - 7.22

The Human Resource program should be broadened at both the Park and Regional Office levels to include all aspects of volunteer management and staff excellence, including skill development and recognition of achievement.

Role:

To deal with all aspects of human resources management, including volunteers. To ensure that all our people have the necessary skills and opportunities for career development, and receive appropriate recognition for achievements.

Activities would include:

Human resources planning; training; recruiting; volunteer management; staff excellence programs; developing reward systems; career path planning and counselling; and human resources information systems, in addition to current Human Resources responsibilities.

WRO would have primary responsibility for:

Human resources planning (developing a framework and systems for implementation); region-wide training (e.g. tourism, hospitality, service excellence); recruiting systems; managing volunteer budgets; volunteer and staff orientation to CPS; developing a volunteer strategy as part of human resources planning; career path planning; recognition and reward systems; and management of international volunteers.

Each park would be responsible for:

Evaluating staff and providing input to human resources planning; identifying park-level training needs; identifying needs for volunteers; providing support for volunteers (e.g. supervision, housing, transportation); and ensuring proper delivery of the volunteer program in the park.

6. Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Resource protection is the central pillar of the CPS mandate, and must therefore be supported by a strong and integrated function. As development pressures increase both inside and outside park boundaries, knowledge and management expertise will become increasingly important. The Parks and People Task Force believes that there are currently several organizational impediments to achieving a fully coordinated and effective resource protection and management program.

First among these impediments is the separation of natural and cultural resource research and management into separate functional groups. This results in a loss of efficiency since research and management programs are not integrated. In addition, cultural resource research and management has traditionally taken a back seat to natural resource programs. If the strategic objective of increasing the profile of cultural resources is to be achieved, all heritage resources must be examined in the same light and priorities established based on consistent criteria.

The Task Force also recognizes that closer links are required between the research and the management of park resources. The Parks and People Task Force agrees with the Science and Protection Task Force that a separate science unit would not be in the interest of "ensuring sound development and application of science into all management and protection activities" (Science and Protection Task Force Report). In order to have a stronger functional ability to manage visitor impacts and ensure protection of the resource the link between research and resource management must be directly linked organizationally.

The traditional inclusion of all aspects of law enforcement and public safety in the Resource Management function weakens the focus of this function and is not in the best interests of the visitor. As a result, we recommend that the Service Management function acquire responsibility for those services which directly affect the visitor experience (e.g. campground patrols), while Resource Management retain responsibility for activities which directly affect the resource (e.g. anti-poaching patrols). Coordinated training and management of all public safety and law enforcement activities would, of course, be required.

The Task Force discussed at length whether cultural and natural resource management planning should be linked more closely with research and management, or other planning activities. In the final analysis, it was felt that better integration of planning processes was the greatest need although strong linkages between heritage resource research, management and planning must be maintained.

Recommendation - 7.23

The Task Force recommends that all natural and cultural resource research, impact assessments and management activities be placed in one functional group.

Role:

To protect and manage cultural and natural resources and processes in an integrated fashion, in order to ensure their continued ecological and cultural integrity.

Activities would include:

Coordinating and conducting scientific research on natural resources; cultural resource research and management; carrying out environmental impact assessments; identifying research requirements for resource protection and management; enforcement for the purposes of resource protection; monitoring the status of park resources; carrying out natural and cultural resource management programs and studies; providing resource information to planning regarding visitor impacts on park resources; monitoring visitor impacts on heritage resources; public safety programs which protect visitors from natural hazards.

WRO responsibilities would include:

Policy and directives for natural and cultural resource management and research, public safety and law enforcement; evaluating the effectiveness of resource management programs, directing and coordinating research; directing and coordinating environmental impact assessments; establishing regional priorities for resource protection and management activities; providing input to all planning activities; liaison with headquarters; providing resource management input on visitor impact management.

Park responsibilities would include:

Conducting resource management research and studies; identifying park research requirements; monitoring visitor impacts; conducting public safety and law enforcement activities in support of resource protection; conducting environmental impact assessments; carrying out resource management activities.

D. We Need to do a Better Job of Recognizing Achievement

The Parks and People Task Force has recognised that one of the greatest motivators available for effective personnel management is the recognition and reward of dedicated and high performing staff. In the past, approaches to rewarding staff were ad hoc and poorly publicised. A lack of a regional strategy and administrative constraints have resulted in the current unsatisfactory state of employee recognition and the lack of individual motivation to take risks in order to improve.

At the moment, dealing with potential industry partners in a co-operative as opposed to a regulatory mode is deemed as a high risk activity. There are no rewards for taking risks, in dealing with the industry, or with the tourism sector; indeed such activities can be viewed as promoting development and hence sacrificing our environmental mandate. Reward systems need to be developed which clearly counterbalance these beliefs.

There is also a need for employee recognition for those who have been innovative in the development of system wide improvements. A variety of such programs are needed to celebrate success - a key element of such programs should be to celebrate team successes as well as individual successes.

Recommendations - Recognizing Achievement

Up to now, we have survived through the dedication and hard work of highly trained and skilled staff. This section provides some basic recommendations to turn this situation around through a program to motivate staff, boost morale and recognize achievement.

Recommendation - 7.24

We Need to Foster Professional Staff Development in Key Areas.

The Western Region will need to obtain professional expertise in visitor impact management, service excellence, in the fields of heritage education, tourism, outdoor recreation and business relations. We can hire some of the needed expertise. We can also reward high performance employees by providing assignments, interchange, training and educational leave opportunities.

Assignment and interchange opportunities with the private sector are particularly effective in recognizing achievement and in fostering professional development. Interchanges, with industry, Tourism Canada or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, would greatly enhance mutual understanding, information exchange and the development of relevant expertise in a short period of time. These opportunities, whether assignments, training or granting educational leave, must be established not only to recognize achievement and

initiative, but to assist in achieving our regional strategic priorities. There are, therefore, significant implications for our Human Resource Planning.

We also need to enhance the "professional" status of employees in non-traditional park roles (e.g. our new tourism expert) by recognizing them as valued members of our management team. Status outside the agency also needs to be enhanced by encouraging key staff to participate actively in professional associations and to present papers at key conferences.

Recommendation - 7.25

We need to demonstrate confidence and trust in our key employees by delegating authority.

Our Task Force has developed many recommendations which require working with partners. If this is ever to become something more than another good but unfulfilled idea, we need to recognize the abilities of our key employees by delegating to them the authority to work with both our private and public sector partners.

Recommendation - 7.26

We need to recognize achievement by enhancing the work environment of deserving employees (...and we have many of them).

Our employees can be rewarded by offering a more varied work environment through job rotation and enhancement. There also needs to be more mobility across functional lines within the agency. We think the "Park Officer Model" has the potential to assist us in this regard.

Staff can also be provided with more opportunities to explore and experience the park or parks they are working in. There are obvious short-term costs to having our staff know the parks, but it seems an essential requirement if we are to develop knowledgeable and committed employees.

Recommendation - 7.27

We need to do a better job of recognizing the importance of our front-line staff.

Many of our front-line staff are relatively new seasonal and term staff. For many visitors, our front-line staff are the Canadian Parks Service! There is not enough that we can do to recognize the contribution of these staff in delivering our programs. A wide range of reward systems should be used which suit the particular work setting. As managers, we should be outdoing ourselves to recognize deserving front-line staff.

Recommendation - 7.28

Reward systems need to be developed and maintained which are credible to our staff.

Employee recognition and reward programs are often counter-productive if they are not properly planned and carried-out. We must develop a variety of employee recognition programs and apply them fairly and consistently. These programs need to be developed in those specific areas where we want to foster staff commitment and dedication. The are of service excellence is a natural starting point for an on-going award program. Service excelence awards could be developed for different product lines (e.g. trails, campgrounds, information centres) in order to support the creation of a regional culture of service excellence.

The awards that we provide need to be more innovative than a certificate presented at a coffee break. In the parks business, we have unlimited opportunities to reward deserving employees (e.g. helicopter rides, backcountry trips, attendance to key conferences).

E. Re-aligning our Organizational Beliefs, Value Systems and Traditions is Needed

Our region's strategic planning process offers us a chance to build a common vision, to share common objectives and to gain support for the tasks that need to be carried out in order to implement that vision. We examined organizational culture in terms of some changes in values that need to be made, some of the processes that could be used to achieve the changes, and the current myths that exist and need to be discarded.

From the perspective of the Task Force on Parks and People a number of changes are seen to be desirable. Perhaps most significant is our observation that many of our employees truly believe in the national parks mandate. Yet, instead of proudly championing our corporate values, we seem to be defensively entrenched in them. Our group lacked the expertise and time to assess the matter further, but do offer the following recommendations for consideration.

Recommendations - Organizational Beliefs, Value Systems and Traditions

Recommendation - 7.29

- ***The belief that the CPS mission, vision, and traditions can remain unchanged and that the world will go on as always has to be discarded.***

- *The organization should look outside more often for help and become less inward looking - it needs to value outward looking initiatives and reach out to others to help it achieve its mission.*

- *The CPS must place a high value not only on activities that take place within the parks themselves but also on activities that reach out to the community, to educational institutions, business partners, and other agencies and groups involved in heritage education, tourism, and recreation.*

- *We need to believe that other organizations can "do right" if initiatives like privatization and partnerships are to work.*

- *If the Western Region is to be able to leverage its limited resources by using volunteers and cooperating with other organizations, beliefs such as, "it takes more work to have someone else do something than do it ourselves" need to be discarded and systems put in place to facilitate voluntary involvement and cooperative activities.*

- *At the same time, our value system must recognize that it takes management time and talent to manage work being done by others.*

- *Visitors must be valued and our dedication to visitor service must become a way of life throughout all parts of the organization. Service excellence must be seen as a key mechanism for building constituency support and fostering environmental stewardship.*

- *Innovation and a greater orientation to risk taking must become an appreciated value that is rewarded.*

- *The organization needs to become much more supportive of professional development particularly if the new skills in tourism, recreation management, partnership negotiations, service excellence, etc., are to become dominant themes in the organization.*

SECTION 8

CONCLUSION - WHAT IS NEXT?

The Task Force recommendations and action statements cover a wide spectrum of activities which will impact on all levels and functions within the organization. The next step is for the Regional Management Committee to endorse or revise strategic recommendations of the Task Force, and to give priority to them. We also recommend that the R.M.C. give a priority to the development of a **business plan**, as well as mechanisms for implementing the recommendations on organizational effectiveness.

It is the opinion of the Task Force that the momentum of the strategic planning initiative needs to be maintained, and that allowing prolonged debate on the strategic recommendations is counter-productive. Therefore, it is important that some actions from our report be implemented soon. This means that the priority activities must be delegated to individuals, committees or task force groups immediately. Strong and clear response to specific recommendations of this report are essential for success.

GLOSSARY

ADVOCACY	The act or process of pleading in favour of support for one's cause (Webster's 9).
BUSINESS PLAN	A total approach to improving operations and client service by identifying opportunities, allocating resources and organizing for immediate and longer range action to achieve desired results.
ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT	A process of verification undertaken to establish whether applicable environmental standards, codes of good conduct, legislative requirements, land use policies are met (Task Force).
EXCELLENCE	That excels or surpasses in any respect, preeminent, superior, extremely good (Concise Oxford Dictionary).
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION	The process of formal and informal learning about Canada's natural and cultural heritage (Task Force).
INTEGRATION	Combining parts into a whole; a desirable outcome of any planning or management process whereby various activities are planned and executed together to achieve greater impact (Task Force).
MARKETING	An organizational activity which seeks to achieve the objectives of the organization by matching the capabilities if the organization with the needs and expectations of it's customers (Adapted from Fundamentals of Marketing; Stanton, Summers, and Barnes).
MARKETING AGREEMENT	An agreement between two partners to share resources in order to achieve mutual marketing objectives in product/service development, research, promotion, distribution, or customer service. The agreement may take many forms including licensing, contracts, sponsorship (Task Force).
MARKET PLANNING	The process of setting marketing goals, selecting target markets, and designing a marketing mix to satisfy these markets and achieve the goals (Adapted from Fundamentals of Marketing; Stanton, Summers, and Barnes).
PARTNERSHIP	A relationship involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities (Task Force).

POSITIONING

Selecting and differentiating a product or service from it's competitor or comparable products in order to match it with specific market segment or to create a distinctive image for it in the marketplace (Task Force).

PRODUCT/ SERVICE LINE

All the products or services marketed by a particular organization which are intended for a similar use (Adapted from Fundamentals of Marketing; Stanton, Summers, and Barnes).

QUALITY

A feature by which a thing may be identified; a distinguishing attribute; superiority in kind (Webster's 9th).

RECREATION

Any activity voluntarily undertaken for pleasure, fun, relaxation, exercise, self-expression, or release from boredom, worry, or tension; that which is physically or psychologically rejuvenating because it is apart from the essential routines of one's life (Vocabulary Guide for Environmental Planners).

Refreshment of strength and spirit after work, a means of refreshment or diversion (Webster's 9th).

SERVICE

Any activity or benefit that one party can offer another that is essentially intangible and does not result in ownership of anything; and the production of which may or may not be tied to a physical object or product (The Service Encounter, Czepiel, Solomon, Surprenant, 1988).

STAKEHOLDER

A party or person who has any interest in undertaking an activity (Task Force).

SUSTAINABILITY/ SUSTAINABLE USE

To ensure than any use of parks resources meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Task Force).

"the goal of maintaining resources and the environment for present and future generations with equity" (Nelson G, 1990).

TOURISM

It is an industry motivated by leisure, recreation, travel, or business. It is also a voluntary activity where experiences are sought. It involves travel away from the home community (Task Force).

The practice of travelling for recreation, the guidance or management of tourists, the promotion or encouragement of touring, the accommodation of tourists (Webster's 9th).